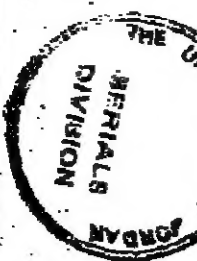


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El Al delays purchase decision

By HAIM SHAPIRO

The El Al board of directors last night decided to put off until today a decision about whether to choose Boeing or Airbus as the supplier of a new fleet of five medium-range aircraft.

Board chairman Yosef Clechmanover said that after seeing that discussions could last far into the night, the directors decided to adjourn and reconvene at 10 a.m. this morning.

A decision will probably be announced at around noon, an El Al spokesman said.

Tension has run high in the process of choosing between the American and European manufacturers. The planes involved, the Airbus 319 and 320 and the Boeing 737-700 and 737-800, are almost identical, but Airbus is said to have offered a lower price and faster delivery.

Countering these factors is some considerable pressure from the US to continue El Al's relationship with Boeing, which has been its sole supplier for several years.

PM, Arafat to meet Clinton



Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu (left) meets with Luxembourg Prime Minister and European Union President Jean-Claude Juncker at Senningen Castle near Luxembourg yesterday. (AP)

By JAY BUSHINSKY,
MARGOT DUDKEVITCH,
and news agencies

LUXEMBOURG — Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat signalled yesterday they had approved a US document for security cooperation, and agreed they would meet with US President Bill Clinton separately in Washington next month.

The agreements emerged after talks between US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright with Netanyahu in Paris and with Arafat in London.

After his meeting, Arafat said the Palestinians had approved a US document on security, which included amendments to a plan proposed by the Palestinians. "We now hope the Israeli side will approve that document," he said. "Theoretically, on Monday, there should be a meeting to put in action and operation that plan."

Arafat said he might meet Netanyahu "in the presence of a third party" to try to revive the peace talks. He made the cryptic remark — a possible hint at direct US mediation — after meeting with British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook in London.

Netanyahu indicated after his three-hour session with Albright that a mechanism had been put into motion by which the US would be constantly involved in preparing for the next IDF rede-

ployment in the West Bank.

At the session were Assistant Secretary of State for Middle Eastern Affairs Martin Indyk, policy adviser Aaron Miller, and peace coordinator Dennis Ross.

"We will have a next-step mechanism," Netanyahu said, "but I prefer to discuss that with my cabinet colleagues," presumably at Sunday's weekly session.

Netanyahu said the cabinet deliberations and meetings with Albright are "the process by which we will move towards redeployment." However, he hinged the pullback's implementation by next June at the earliest on total Palestinian fulfillment of obligations undertaken in the Hebron Agreement to eliminate terrorism.

This "corrective" approach to the PA is embodied in an as-yet unpublished document, versions of which were drafted in Washington and Jerusalem for presentation by Albright to Arafat after her talks with Netanyahu, which they want Arafat to sign.

Implementation by the PA's security services would then be monitored by Tel Aviv- and Jerusalem-based Central Intelligence Agency officials and Israeli authorities.

Netanyahu called this "two sides of an equation" whereby the Palestinians carry out obligations to fight terrorism and "Israel implements redeployment."

Netanyahu repeatedly denied that any changes in the IDF's cur-

rent deployment were mentioned.

"We didn't offer any specific percentages of redeployment," Netanyahu said. "We explained our security concerns to explain the way we're thinking about redeployment in a way that it would not impinge on our security."

Netanyahu told Albright he faces a difficult domestic debate in trying to get hard-liners to agree on Israeli-Palestinian borders in a final peace agreement.

"We did not offer any percentages," he said, but rather "explained Israel's strategic concerns and security interests. The Americans understand that we are serious in our intention to advance the political process."

He said OC Planning Branch Maj.-Gen. Shlomo Yanai went into detail by means of a map based on the Oslo Accords.

"We emphasized that the process depends on fulfillment of the Palestinians' commitments to eliminate terrorism from the areas under their jurisdiction."

Albright called her meetings with Netanyahu and Arafat "substantive and intensive and focused" on resolving differences mostly over security and control of the West Bank. She said it is now up to the two leaders to work to reach an agreement on how much land Israel will cede to Palestinian control in a final settlement.

See PM, Page 12

Letter from the publisher

By NORMAN SPECTOR

Over the past several months, *The Jerusalem Post* has nearly doubled in size, expanding to 20 pages most days and to 24 on Mondays and Fridays. We have added new writers, new features, and I am pleased to report, many new subscribers.

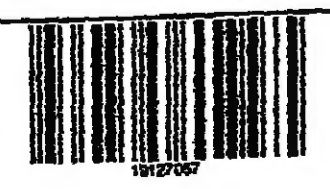
I have been heartened by the reaction to these changes, particularly by the overwhelming number of you who have taken the time to write to me personally to offer your comments and suggestions. All have been explored and many have been implemented. Others remain on the drawing board for future consideration.

Today we take the next steps in our continuing campaign to give you a better paper. Partly because we are so enthusiastic about these changes and want as many as possible to see them, partly as a Hanukkah gift, next Friday's edition will be sold at newsstands for just NIS 4.50 — our regular weekday price. You will also find inside next Friday's edition of the *Post* a coupon that entitles you to a very special price for one month of our improved home delivery service.

See PUBLISHER, Page 18

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The myth of the poor Israeli driver

Of all the myths and misconceptions Israelis have about traffic safety, or the lack of it, none is more prevalent than the idea that the root of the problem is the "Israeli mentality."

IT'S NO ACCIDENT

By Larry Dorfner

The main reasons for so many accidents and deaths on the roads, goes the folklore, are that 1) Israelis are so aggressive, and 2) they are so tense from terror and war that they can't keep their minds on their driving.

"This theory is for laymen and journalists. Among experts in the

field, it doesn't carry much weight," said Dr. Don Mouskwas, an industrial psychologist with the Technion's Transportation Research Institute.

The only "unique" element in Israeli character, as far as driving goes, is a positive one: Israelis, on the whole, drink much less alcohol

than do foreigners. Drunk driving accounts for 20 percent-30% of road deaths abroad, and only 25%-4% in Israel, said the Transport Ministry's Dr. Dan Link, one of the country's most influential traffic safety experts.

See ACCIDENTS, Page 18

Hebrew prevails in Montreal

By RON CHILLAG

MONTREAL — Red-faced officials in Quebec closed their case this week against a Jewish tombstone maker, one day after French-language inspectors cited the man for violating strict laws.

The minister in charge of Quebec's French Language Charter — which enforces French as the only official language in Quebec — said inspectors were over-zealous in going after Mendy Berson, who makes gravestones for Montreal's Jewish community.

See HEBREW, Page 18

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NEWS

in brief

PA tries to stymie large Hamas rally

The Palestinian Authority has prevented Hamas activists from staging a large rally in Gaza's Yarmuk Stadium today, offering them the option of staging it at a smaller site instead.

Palestinians claim that the Palestinian Police arrested 80-100 activists as they were hanging up posters giving details of the rally, which is to be addressed by Sheikh Ahmed Yassin.

The rally was organized to mark the 10th anniversary of the intifada and the second anniversary of the assassinations of Hamas activists Yihye Ayyash and Imad Akeel.

Mohammed Najib and Margot Dudkevitch

SLA soldier killed in bomb blast

A South Lebanese Army soldier was killed in a roadside bomb blast in the Jezzine enclave north of the security zone early yesterday morning.

Hizbullah claimed responsibility for the bomb attack against SLA troops who were patrolling in the Jezzine area.

In a separate incident, SLA troops discovered explosive devices and other munitions in three separate places in the western sector of the security zone yesterday.

The devices included anti-personnel mines, wire used for detonating explosives, a booby-trapped bag and detonators. The booby-trapped bag exploded, but without causing any casualties or damage. The other devices were neutralized. David Rudge

Bashara denies being expelled from Lebanon

MK Azmi Bashara (Hadash) yesterday denied foreign news agency reports that he had canceled his trip to Beirut, where he was to address a conference, because the Lebanese authorities would not allow him to visit refugee camps. Bashara was to visit Beirut after a stay in Syria, where he met Foreign Minister Farouk Shara. According to his parliamentary aide, he decided to remain in Syria "for several reasons" and was scheduled to meet with the Hamas leadership there last night. Liat Collins

Student pilot and instructor die in crash

Flight instructor Yaron Niv, 36, of Ra'anana, and student Oriy Hazan, 25, of Eilat, died while flying a light plane yesterday, after trying unsuccessfully to make an emergency landing at the Herzliya air field. According to preliminary investigations, the causes of the crash appear to be engine failure and pilot error, said Kochav Hess, a Civil Aviation Authority official who investigates air crashes. Several minutes after takeoff the pilot reported strange engine noises, and while trying to land, the aircraft stalled and crashed, striking a storage building before it broke apart, investigators said. Irit

Hiriya dump threatens access to airport

The Hiriya garbage dump could collapse and prevent access to Ben-Gurion Airport from the Geha Road. Environment Ministry Director-General Nehama Ronen said, during a tour of the site.

A landslide from the garbage dump earlier this week blocked part of the Ayalon River. The order issued by Environment Minister Raphael Eitan allowing for the river to be diverted is being contested by landowners, who say the diversion cuts across their property. The Ayalon is in danger of flooding because of the garbage blockages and the water could reach the Geha Road, about half a kilometer away, ministry officials believe. Liat Collins

Winning numbers

In yesterday's weekly Payis Hazak drawing ticket number 290499 won NIS 1.5 million, while ticket number 054228 won the car.

Tickets 149005, 337633,

659624, 821798, 764157, 110155, 864523 and 291074 won NIS 5,000. Tickets ending in 24527, 56629, 50595, 18152, 38807, 96453, 62677, 46961, 59100, 04931, 73220, 35992, 77271, 35551, 85707, 16183, 37089, 29083 and 05745 won NIS 1,000.

Tickets ending in 193, 126, 143 and 434 won NIS 100. Tickets ending in 02, 53, 31 and 69 won NIS 30. Tickets ending in 86 and 61 won NIS 20. Tickets ending in 2 and 5 won NIS 10.

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11:00 a.m.

12:00 noon

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2:00 p.m.

2:00 p.m.

1:50 and

3:15 p.m.

4:40 p.m.

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Magician's show at the Gutnick Center (NIS 5)
Clowns, funny shaped balloons, treats
Movie on Hebron, shown every half hour at Beit Hadassah
Short guided tour for families, leaving from the Gutnick Center
Lecture in English by Rabbani Miriam Levinger at Avraham Avinu Synagogue: "The Challenge of Living in Hebron"
Visit to the home of the artist Baruch Nachshon, and talk in Hebrew: "To Be an Artist Living in Hebron", leaving from the Gutnick Center
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Avital has 'tougher than anticipated' meeting in London

UK plans to pressure Israel when it assumes EU presidency

By DOUGLAS DAVIS

LONDON - Senior British officials yesterday set Europe and Israel on a collision course, when they said London will exert intense pressure on Israel to be more forthcoming in the peace process after Britain assumes the presidency of the European Union on January 1.

They signalled that, despite Israeli objections, Europe now intends to translate its formidable economic power into political clout and become a major player in the peace process.

The officials left no doubt that they hold Israel exclusively to

blame for the lack of progress. One official said progress in the peace process will be "absolutely at the top of our list of priorities during the period of our presidency," and identified three areas where Britain would concentrate its efforts:

- Support for the US formula of a "time-out" on settlements;
- Support for a "credible and substantial" further redeployment on the West Bank; and
- Support for improved security cooperation between Israel and the Palestinians.

This was also essentially the message British ministers gave

Palestinian Authority Chairman Yasser Arafat when he arrived in London for a meeting with US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright.

He was assured that Britain would apply intense pressure on Israel "to unblock the obstacles to progress in the peace process."

In a private briefing, a British official brushed aside an unusually tough Foreign Ministry statement which described the EU's Luxembourg Declaration as "unbalanced" and added that "Europe disqualifies itself from playing a positive role in the process."

The declaration, which was

adopted by the 15 EU heads of government last Saturday, commits Europe to:

- "Enhance its support to Palestinian institutions in East Jerusalem";
- Offer "specific suggestions" on final-status issues, such as "possible Palestinian statehood, borders/security arrangements, settlements, refugees, Jerusalem, and water issues"; and
- Continue using its "watch instruments" to monitor developments on human rights, Jerusalem, and settlements.

Only one of the 18 points relating to the peace process in the

declaration "recalled the EU's determination to fight terrorism where it occurs and for whatever reason."

The British official acknowledged that Israel "had expressed concern on some of the points, but said he hoped they were better understood" after a prolonged meeting in London yesterday with Foreign Ministry Deputy Director-General Colette Avital, which she described as "tougher than anticipated."

The official added ominously: "I would caution any country not to deny the EU a role. It would be unwise for Israel to turn its back on what the EU can offer."

Harel: Some settlements must go

By LIAT COLLINS and Irit

Some settlements in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza will have to be removed, Third Way whip Yehuda Harel said yesterday, during a visit to Samaria.

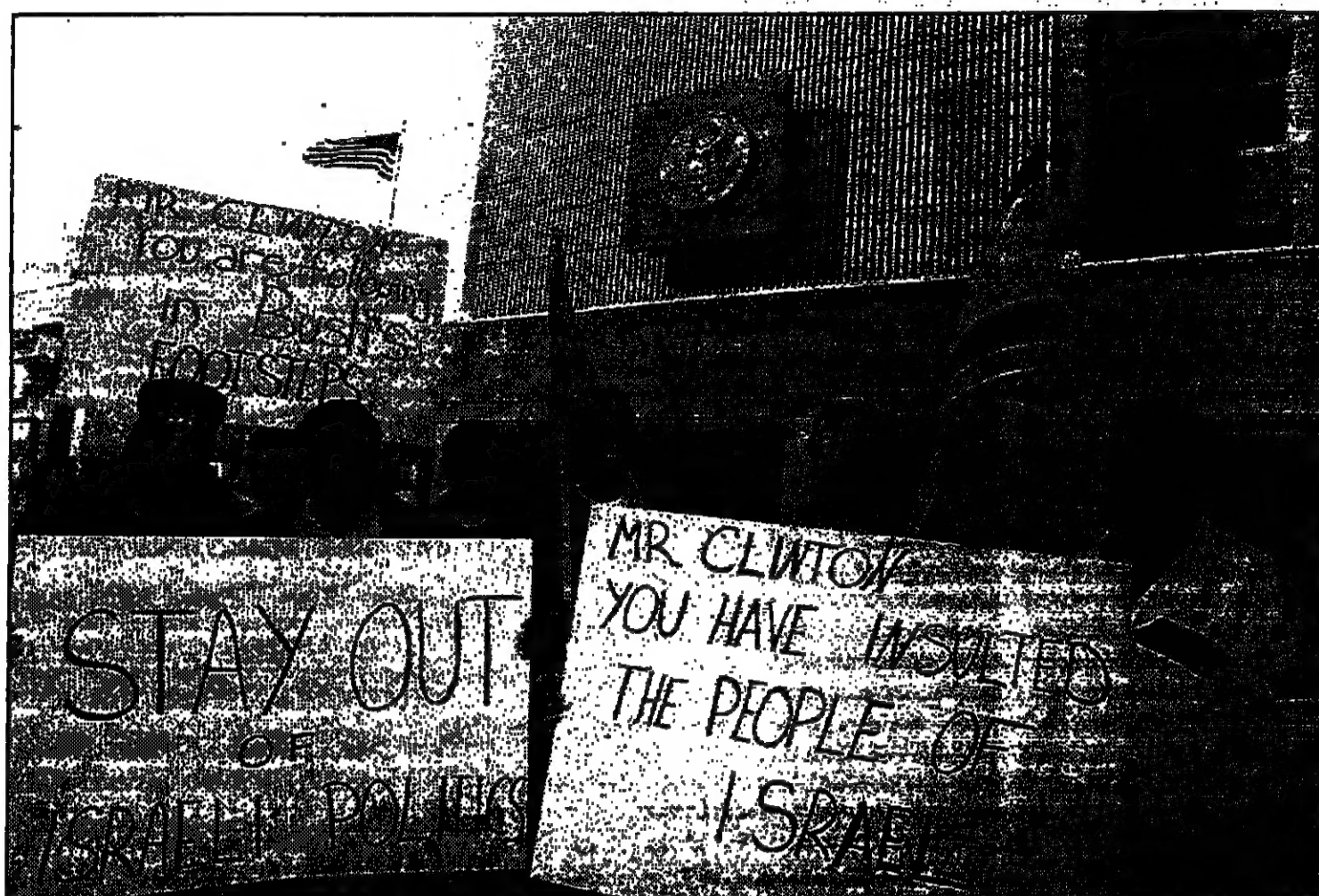
Among those settlements he said will not be able to remain are small settlements adjacent to Nablus and Jenin, "such as Ganim and Kadim."

"We must separate between areas densely populated by Palestinians and areas with a concentration of Israelis. And there are Israeli settlements which we will have no choice but to evacuate, because they lie at the furthest tip of the Jordan Valley, like Elon Moreh," added Harel.

Harel said the party's platform called for a process of separation and supports dividing territory according to this principle, even at the stage of the second further redeployment. He added, however, that some settlements will remain.

Samaria Council head Arye Ofri was not surprised by Harel's statement, although he rejected the idea. "We must first and foremost find the way to live together, side by side," he said.

Harel's comments aroused anger on the Right. National Religious Party whip Hanan Porat responded to the Third Way's idea of dismantling settlements by saying: "It's a pity they haven't internalized [the fact] that both 'the first way' and 'the second way' rule out removing settlements. The Third Way is bypassing Labor on the left and joining up with Meretz and the Arab parties."



Settlers from Ariel protest outside the US Embassy in Tel Aviv yesterday against a contemplated West Bank pullback. Ariel Mayor Ron Nahman (second from right) holds a placard that reads: "Mr. Clinton You Have Insulted the People of Israel." (Yael Soudki/Israel Sun)

Settlers: Pullback could lead to bloodbath

By MARGOT DUDKEVITCH

As Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu and US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright met in Paris yesterday, settlers from Ariel protested outside the US Embassy

in Tel Aviv against American pressures for an Israeli withdrawal in the West Bank.

Holding placards, dozens of residents led by Ariel Mayor Ron Nahman also demanded a halt to what they deemed as US interven-

tion in Israeli policies.

"We are here to tell the Americans that we are not a banana republic," said Nahman. He accused US President Bill Clinton of pursuing the policies of his predecessor George Bush, who tried to bring down a Likud government by withholding loan guarantees.

"The Americans will be responsible for a bloodbath if they do not refrain from their pressures upon

us," Nahman charged.

Meanwhile MK Michael Kleiner (Likud-Gesher), chairman of the Knesset lobby, The Land of Israel Front, said in an interview on Arutz 7 radio, that he stood by his statement calling Netanyahu a "Pharaoh who weakens Israel and brings us closer to war."

Kleiner said that once a decision was made for a withdrawal, he and other coalition MKs would vote no confidence in the government.

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Egypt to PM: Don't come empty-handed

By DOUGLAS DAVIS
and news agencies

LONDON — Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Moussa said in comments published yesterday that Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu should not come to Egypt unless he has something new to offer to revive peace efforts.

Moussa also told the London-based daily *al-Hayat* that changes in the views of the Iranian leadership on world affairs, including peace overtures with Israel, had paved the way for improved Egyptian-Iranian relations.

Asked if Egypt was willing to receive Netanyahu, Moussa replied: "No, because he has nothing new to offer. If we are going to talk to him about his past and the unfulfilled promises then the conversation will be a repetition and what it would cost and the harm it will cause outweighs its benefit."

"We are not saying we don't want to deal with the Israeli prime minister — there is nothing to prevent him from coming."

"If he (Netanyahu) has taken a position that everyone thinks means he has turned his back on the peace process, then we won't make it easy for him to swallow Palestine or to pressure the Palestinians to accept what he has to offer which is little," Moussa said.

Israeli officials are concerned that Egypt is producing stocks of highly lethal VX nerve gas at a

supposedly conventional chemicals factory near Cairo.

Concern has been heightened by recent Egyptian military maneuvers, which "showed that Egypt considers Israel as its potential enemy," according to the weekly newsletter *Foreign Report* published yesterday.

Quoting an Israeli source, the newsletter says that "all recent Egyptian army maneuvers are programmed to send the army into the Sinai peninsula to fight the Israelis."

And it quotes Israeli intelligence reports as indicating that "there is a serious possibility of the Egyptian army entering the Sinai peninsula if Palestinian-Israeli relations deteriorate further and Israel decides to attack the Palestinian territories."

"Such an eventuality," it adds, "would force Israel to send at least two divisions to its southern border to block a possible — even if remote — Egyptian attack."

Egypt has hinted that it is prepared to destroy its stocks of VX gas if Israel opens its nuclear facilities to international inspection and signs an agreement on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

But the newsletter adds: "Israel has explained that this is out of the question — not because of Egypt, but because of Syrian, Iraqi and Iranian threats to Israel."

The Israeli source told *Foreign Report* that Egypt delivered its first chemical weapons to Syria in

1972 as part of the preparation for the Yom Kippur War in October 1973.

In the final stages of the war, an Israeli expeditionary force crossed the Suez Canal, surrounded the Egyptian Third Army and blockaded about 10,000 Egyptian soldiers.

"At that point, Egypt ordered the opening of armories where the secret weapons were stored, in preparation for using them. It was only after Israeli military intelligence intercepted the orders to use the lethal gas that Israel allowed food and water to be brought to the besieged Egyptians. That was the end of the war."

Egypt was the first Arab country to use chemical weapons when its aircraft dropped mustard gas bombs on Yemeni civilians in the village of Sada, near the Saudi border, on June 8, 1963. Egyptian raids on Yemeni villages continued until the summer of 1967 and lethal gas has been in production ever since. Thousands of tons of chemical weapons are believed to have been produced.

A senior IDF commander confirmed that the Egyptian armed forces have undergone an "astonishing" improvement in the past two to three years regarding weapons acquisition.

The source also said that the Egyptians would likely interfere militarily if Israel seriously started putting down any Palestinian unrest and reconquering parts of the West Bank.



Neeman pays a hospital visit

Finance Minister Yaakov Neeman looks at a picture about Hanukka with 6-year-old Hijazi Rasha, during a visit with cancer patients at the Schneider Children's Medical Center in Petah-Tikva yesterday.

(Israel Sun)

Reform cancel service at Wall

By HAIM SHAPIRO

The Reform delegates to the World Zionist Congress will not hold a planned havdala service at the Western Wall tomorrow night. The decision followed a personal appeal from Finance Minister Yaakov Neeman, who argued that their presence could endanger a compromise on the conversion bill, which he heads.

The Reform leaders said that

they agreed with sorrow not to have an organized visit to the Wall, despite the tradition of every Reform delegation visiting Israel to do so.

Yonatan Livni, chairman of the Israel Union for Progressive Judaism, said last night that it is a pity to have such narrow-mindedness at a time when everyone is sitting together to work out a compromise.

Rabbi Eric Yoffie, president of the Union of American Hebrew

Congregations and one of the leaders of the Reform delegation, the largest single group of delegates from the US, said that he and his colleagues are to meet with Neeman today. He said that they would tell him that while they are anxious to reach a compromise, they will not agree to yet another delay for the committee to reach a

conclusion after the present January 31 deadline.

He added that whatever the procedure, it is essential that those who would have been converted by the Reform movement be accepted as Jews in Israel and that there be a way for the masses of Russian immigrants who wanted to become Jews to do so.

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Ruth Matar interviews

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Hanukka Misconceptions — The Maccabees and the Hellenists
and

Edward Kuznetzov — Editor of "Vesti"

Yosef Mendeleevitch — Famous Refusenik
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סופר קואופ

הפרקטים

NEWS

in brief

Israel, Palestinian envoys talk in Athens

Seeking to nudge forward the peace process, Israelis and Palestinians went to Athens and opened unofficial talks yesterday on ways to bridge some key issues.

"These meetings will find difficulties in reaching agreements," said Marwan Barghout, a member of the Palestinian Legislative Council, in a speech opening the three-day meeting sponsored by the Greek government.

Meir Shalev, the Likud whip in the Knesset, urged the Palestinians not to "lose this opportunity" to add momentum to the peace process.

"At the end we will sign the agreement on the final status solution," Shalev said. AP

China's foreign minister to visit

China, eager for a bigger role on the world stage, yesterday sent Vice-Premier and Foreign Minister Qian Qichen on a five-nation tour of the Middle East to push for peace in the region. Qian, accompanied by his wife, Zhou Hongjing, and Assistant Foreign Minister Ji Peidong, is to visit Lebanon, Syria, Israel, Egypt, and the Palestinian Authority through December 26. He will be here from Sunday to Wednesday. Jerusalem Post Staff

Israel, Jordan to protect coral reefs

Israeli and Jordanian officials yesterday launched a US-funded project to protect coral reefs in the Gulf of Eilat. In a ceremony in Jerusalem, the US Agency for International Development gave \$2 million for research and monitoring of the reef over the next three years.

In the "Bi-national Red Sea Marine Peace Park" project, the two countries will work together to protect the coral reefs and the marine environment from abuse and overuse. Jordanian and Israeli scientists will also conduct cooperative research. AP

Arab car tires slashed

Fifteen cars in the Sheikh Jarrah neighborhood of Jerusalem had their tires slashed late Wednesday night. A caller to a radio station claimed it was done by a member of the outlawed Kach organization. Elli Wohlgelemer

Labor to announce J'lem candidate in March

The Labor Party said yesterday that it would announce its candidate for mayor of Jerusalem in early March. At a meeting in Jerusalem with Binyamin Ben-Eliezer, the head of Labor's municipal caucus, leaders of the party put forth the name of former minister Shimon Shalev, and came out against the candidacy of Maj.-Gen. (res.) Yoram Yair. Ben-Eliezer said the party must put forth an attractive candidate to run against Mayor Ehud Olmert. Elli Wohlgelemer

Magen David Adom warns of hypothermia

Magen David Adom warns the public to beware of hypothermia - body temperature lowered below 35 degrees Celsius due to cold weather and unheated homes. To avoid hypothermia, keep fingers, nose, ears, and toes protected and dry. Babies should be dressed in layers, so they can move their limbs.

In the event of hypothermia, the victim should lay down in a warm, protected place and be covered with blankets to warm gradually. Only a conscious victim should be given something warm to drink. Do not give a victim alcohol or a cigarette, as both cause blood vessels to constrict. Judy Siegel

Vanunu wants out of isolation with no strings

Nuclear spy Mordechai Vanunu refuses to promise that he won't talk about his work at Israel's nuclear reactor if he is released from solitary confinement, MK Yossi Katz said yesterday.

Katz met with Vanunu at Ashkelon Prison, where the former nuclear technician has been held in isolation for 11 years, since being convicted of spying nuclear secrets in 1986.

Internal Security Minister Avigdor Kahalani visited Vanunu last week and said he still posed a threat to state security and would remain in solitary confinement. AP

Soldier injured by stray bullet

An IDF soldier accidentally shot himself in the hand yesterday with his service pistol in the parking lot of the Supreme Court in Jerusalem. The injured soldier was taken to the hospital. Civilian police handed the pistol over to the Military Police, which is investigating the incident. Itim

Barak accuses PM of capitulating to Albright

By SARAH HONIG

Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu "has capitulated," Labor Party chairman Ehud Barak charged yesterday. "He told us that he presented the Americans with no new maps, but he knows full well that he had already undertaken to pull back from 10.5 percent of the land under our control."

Addressing fellow Laborites at the party's political bureau session, Barak maintained that "Netanyahu is guilty of duplicity. He thinks he can fool all of the people all of the time. He certainly attempted to mislead his own

ministers when he told them that he is going to Paris with no maps, that he will not refer to the security interests map, and that he will not refer to the national interests map. All this after he had already committed Israel beforehand to cede over 10% of Area C."

Barak then went on to accuse Netanyahu of having "capitulated to the Americans. There is no other way to describe what has happened except as a total, unconditional surrender. All the commitments have already been made to the Americans. What we witness now is a show and nothing more."

The "road to capitulation was

paved by no one else than Netanyahu. He maneuvered himself into this American dictate. It is a shame that he handled things in such a manner that it had come to this. It would have been better if Israel had ceded territory as a result of negotiations, and of its own free will, and not because its prime minister caved in to pressure which he had invited," Barak contended.

Netanyahu, according to Barak, "may not have unfolded the security or national interests maps, but the one map which guided him was the map of his own political survival."

The bureau named Yehiel Leket

as its candidate for chairman of the Jewish National Fund board of directors.

Meretz leader Yossi Sarid told his party's executive last night that "Netanyahu is a kidnapped prime minister" being held hostage. Those who have captured him are the National Religious Party and Gush Emunim. He is at their mercy. The entire nation is being held to ransom by this bunch."

For the sake "of this nation, it would be best if dozens of settlements be dismantled right now, at this early stage, before they cause even greater calamities than they have already wrought," he said.

Labor angry at hiring of security chief

By SARAH HONIG

Labor politicians were angry yesterday with the hiring of private investigator Meir Palevsky to head a party "security service," and said they suspected that his real job would be to spy on them.

Party leader Ehud Barak denied hiring Palevsky, although Barak's office said Wednesday that Palevsky was hired with his full approval.

Palevsky also said that it wasn't Barak who took him on, but he would not say who did.

Many Labor members suspect that Palevsky's brief will be to spy on them. They maintain that personal surveillance is Palevsky's well-proven specialty.

He was involved in various affairs in Labor over the decades. The most famous involved some letters written against Yitzhak Rabin in 1978, at the height of Rabin's feud with Shimon Peres. Rabin suspected the letters were bogus and Palevsky elicited proof that they were the handiwork of former Peres aide Yossi Beilin.

Barak has come under stinging attack in Labor ever since last week's uneventful Labor convention in which he failed to win approval for his plan to appoint a director-general.

Barak was accused of being dictatorial and of dismissing the party and its MKs as hindrances to his prime ministerial aspirations.

A number of Labor MKs argued that Barak may have grown even more suspicious and wary than previously, in light of the post-convention onslaught against him.

"He may have sought to preempt what he suspects are plots being hatched against him by hiring professional help," a prominent Labor MK said last night.

"It is no accident Palevsky just happens to have appeared on the scene precisely when anti-Barak sentiment reached unprecedented levels. ... This is obviously a move geared to stem internal criticism of the party leader - in the best tradition of undemocratic leaders."



Jordanian MPs visit Knesset

Knesset Speaker Dan Tichon yesterday accepts a gift from Sheikh Mohammed Rafat (right) and Hamada Parana, two Jordanian Parliament members who visited the Knesset yesterday. Tichon plans to visit Jordan next month as the guest of King Hussein, and accepted the parliamentarians' invitation to visit their parliament as well. (Globe Photo)

Pollard lawyer: Truth could embarrass gov't

By HERSH KEINON

Jonathan Pollard's well-publicized rebuke of Foreign Minister David Levy was not directed at Levy personally, but at the Foreign Ministry in general, his Jerusalem lawyer, Larry Dub, said yesterday.

"For 13 years Jonathan is sitting in prison, about an hour from Washington, and nobody from the embassy has seen fit to visit him, ask him if he wants a bar of soap, a newspaper, anything," Dub said.

"It takes ministers from Jerusalem to come and visit. It seems kind of strange."

During a meeting with Com-

munications Minister Limor Livnat on Wednesday, Pollard - angry at reports that the Foreign Ministry was discouraging Israeli officials from visiting him - likened Levy to the "idiot" who built the bridge that collapsed at the Macabiah Games last summer.

Dub said that recent visits by Livnat and Absorption Minister Yuli Edelstein to Pollard in prison, as well as a letter to Pollard sent by Labor and Social Affairs Minister Eli Yishai, are not indicative of any policy change on the Pollard affair, but were done at the ministers' initiative. Livnat also brought a letter to Pollard from Prime Minister

Binyamin Netanyahu.

Dub alleged that the government is lying by saying that it has to work quietly to obtain Pollard's release, that Pollard was part of a rogue spy operation, and that he has never expressed remorse.

The government, Dub maintained, still has not claimed responsibility for Pollard.

Pollard, a former US navy analyst, was arrested in November 1985 and sentenced later to life in prison for spying for Israel.

A petition is pending before the High Court of Justice which seeks to force the government to recognize Pollard as an Israeli agent.

The three-justice panel has scheduled another session on the petition for next month.

Dub said he is convinced Pollard will not win freedom until Israel publicly recognizes that he worked as an agent for the government.

A Foreign Ministry official said yesterday that although its policy has been to try and win Pollard's release through "quiet channels," away from media attention, the ministry is not opposed to high-profile meetings with Pollard.

Following the visits by Edelstein and Livnat, the official said, it is safe to assume that Pollard's prison in North Carolina

will become a pilgrimage site for other Israeli dignitaries. "We have no objections," the official said.

In a recorded conversation released by his wife in October, Pollard alleged Israel's policy toward him was "burying me alive."

"They [Israel] want me here for as long as they [the US authorities] bloody well keep me here. If I die here, the truth will die with me," Pollard added at the time.

Dub contended there are officials in the Foreign and Defense ministries who would end up with "egg on their faces" if lies about the affair were ever exposed.

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סוכן מן הארץ

Six Day War general Narkiss dies

By ELI WOHLGELERNER

Uzi Narkiss, under whose command in 1967 Israeli troops liberated Jerusalem's Old City in the Six Day War, died late Wednesday night at the capital's Hadassah-University Hospital, Ein Kerem, after a long illness. He was 72.

As OC Central Command, it was Narkiss who directed the battalions in capturing the eastern half of the city on June 7. Earlier that morning, after receiving Mordechai (Motta) Gur's famous radio transmission — "The Temple Mount is in our hands!" — Narkiss went to the Temple Mount to share the historic moment with the paratroopers who captured it.

"There was never such a thing as this for the one who stands here now," Narkiss said. "There are no words on my lips. We all pay tribute to history."

Simcha Dinitz, former head of the Jewish Agency and World Zionist Organization, where Narkiss worked for over 20 years following his retirement from the army in 1968, praised Narkiss. "We have lost a great soldier, a very decent human being, and a great public servant, who served his country in time of war as well as in time of development," said Dinitz. "He showed a high sense of dedication, ability, and humility, and we will sorely miss him."

Born January 6, 1925 in Jerusalem, Narkiss was a 16-year-old at the Gymnasia High School when he joined the Palmach's 1st Company, under Yigal Allon. It was the start of a 27-year army career.

While serving as battalion commander in the War of Independence, Narkiss attempted to come to the relief of the besieged Jewish Quarter in the Old City in May 1948, breaking through Zion Gate before being ordered to pull out.

He also commanded the Etzion Bloc settlements for three months, before it fell to Jordan.

Narkiss was sent to France in 1953 as the first Israeli student at Ecole de Guerre, and was military attaché there from 1959-1962. He was later awarded the Legion of Honor by the French government.

Narkiss was named the first director of the National Defense College when it opened in 1963, and was named OC Central Command in December 1965.



In a famous photo from the Six Day War, (from left) OC Central Command Maj.-Gen. Uzi Narkiss, Defense Minister Moshe Dayan, and Chief of General Staff Lt.-Gen. Yitzhak Rabin enter Jerusalem's Old City through the Lions' Gate on June 7, 1967. Inset, Uzi Narkiss (Times photo: Sarah Uziel)

The man who undid the past

By ABRAHAM RABINOVICH

History offered Uzi Narkiss a second chance in June 1967 and he seized it with both hands.

For 19 years, he had been haunted by a sense of unease over his role in the fall of the Jewish Quarter. As a deputy battalion commander in the Palmach brigade commanded by Yitzhak Rabin, Narkiss was ordered in May 1948 to break through to the besieged quarter.

His men succeeded in blowing a hole in Zion Gate and linking up with the beleaguered defenders. Supplies and reinforcements were rushed in and wounded evacuated, but the force that was to relieve Narkiss's men did not materialize. Unwilling to keep his elite unit bottled up, he ordered his men out. Nine days later the quarter fell.

As OC Central Command on the eve of the Six Day War, Narkiss was suddenly confronted by the extraordinary possibility of undoing the past. However, he was cautioned by defense minister Moshe Dayan that the entire offensive weight of the IDF was being committed to the Egyptian front. Even in the face of Jordanian provocation, he was to exercise restraint.

The Jordanian intervention proved substantial and a paratroop brigade no longer needed on the Egyptian front was dispatched to Jerusalem to relieve the threatened Israeli enclave on Mt. Scopus. Confronting with the paratroop commander, Col. Motta Gur, on his planned breakthrough to Mt. Scopus via Anunim Hill, Narkiss told him to also dispatch forces to the Rockefeller Museum, two kilometers south, so as to be in position to penetrate the Old City walls. Until that point, no one in authority had broached the idea of attacking the Old City.

Less than two days later, Narkiss reentered the walled city, together with Dayan and Rabin. Despite the exaltation of the moment, Narkiss cautioned all forces against looting or harming any holy places.

Even as a conquering general, Uzi Narkiss remained a mensch.

NEWS

in brief

Teddy bares all

A police raid Wednesday on an apartment in Jerusalem's Kiryat Menahem neighborhood resulted in the arrest of the 25-year-old mother of a six year old, after police found the child's teddy bear filled with drugs.



The drug-filled teddy bear (Brian Hendler)

Eli Wohlgelesner

Palestinian helped by Dayan dies

Osama Hassan, the Palestinian treated on Wednesday night by OC Central Command Maj.-Gen. Uzi Dayan, died early yesterday morning in Ramallah Hospital.

He had been trapped in his car after an accident, when Dayan, on his way to honor a fallen IDF soldier Wednesday night, stopped to administer first aid. Dayan had been flying in his helicopter, when he spotted the accident. He ordered his pilot to land and rushed to help. Dayan resuscitated Hassan and applied a tourniquet, while other officers pried open the wreck. Dayan only let up when an IDF doctor arrived.

Jerusalem Post Staff

Dell: Long school day agreement reached

Education Ministry Director-General Ben Zion Dell said yesterday that the ministry "has reached a full understanding with the Histadrut Teachers Union on all formal matters related to operating the long school day."

Dell, who made his statement after a meeting with the teachers, said instructions regarding just how the long school day will operate will be disseminated throughout the education system after they are worked out with the teachers. The long school day is scheduled to start in 100 communities on January 1.

Aryeh Dean Cohen

Health unions to protest arrangements bill

Unions representing various sectors of the health services have organized a joint demonstration for Sunday morning opposite the Knesset to protest plans to add charges to the health basket.

A protest tent will be set up opposite the Knesset through December 31, the day the Knesset is to vote on the arrangements bill.

Judy Siegel

You can't get rabies from infected beef or milk

There is no danger that rabies can be transferred by eating beef or drinking milk from a rabid cow, the Health Ministry said yesterday, in response to news reports suggesting this possibility after a cow in the Galilee was found to have rabies. There is no known case of a person being infected with rabies by eating the meat of an animal that had rabies, the ministry said. The virus passes via the saliva of an infected animal. Judy Siegel

Husseini urges two capitals in Jerusalem

By ARYEH DEAN COHEN

The fact that Faisal Husseini, Uzi Landau and Nissim Ziv did not appear on the same dais at yesterday's session on "What Prospects for the Peace Process?" at the Seventh International Conference of the Jewish Media seemed to answer the question before the discussion began.

But despite the undiplomatic staging, Husseini, of the Palestinian Authority, and Ziv, Labor's secretary-general, held out hope for the peace process, while Landau, of the Likud, predictably all but buried it.

Husseini, in charge of Jerusalem affairs for the PA, was escorted by several Palestinian security men.

"If I'm looking at the long term, I'm optimistic, and I believe peace

is coming," he said. "There is no other way but to have peace. This doesn't mean there are no other options; there are many options, but the best one and right one is peace."

"We believe the solution in Jerusalem must be...two capitals in one, open free-access city. I'm not talking about a unified city, a united city, but free access in Jerusalem," he continued.

Husseini proposed that the "1967 lines" be used to set the limits of each capital.

"There would be no need for any type of visas for traveling between these two capitals...Maybe we'll have two municipalities or one municipality. Maybe we'll have tourist police or capital police, which will be a joint police to operate in areas where there is direct contact between the two

sides. But I believe we can solve all these matters and details," he said.

Husseini said he dreams "that one day, if a Palestinian speaks of 'our Jerusalem,' then Israelis will immediately understand 'our' as meaning 'his and mine,' and if any Israeli says 'our Jerusalem,' immediately I would understand that 'our' means 'his and mine.'"

"Oslo no longer exists as a real peace process," Landau, chairman of the Knesset Foreign and Affairs Committee, said. "What we've got now is a situation where we're offering to trade land for time. We are giving them land and gaining some time."

Landau said he would oppose making another withdrawal unless the Palestinians met all their commitments.

Zivli said that "we not only want peace, like every Israeli, but we believe we can achieve it."

He said that little progress could be made "if we keep saying no, and if we destroy the confidence we worked so hard to build."

Robert Bleiweiss, editor of *The Jewish Spectator* quarterly magazine, said the discussion "reminded me of the commentary on the Talmud: He's right, and he's right and he's right. I'm not optimistic about the chances for peace at all."

The Oslo Accord, he said, was a keyhole for peace. I think the keyhole has now closed.

Peter Kardar, who broadcasts a Jewish radio show in Sweden, said he thought there may be problems in the Oslo process. "But we don't have any alternative to the peace process."

Suspect remanded in Haifa murder

By DAVID RUDGE

A suspect in the murder of Haifa businessman Yigal Almagor was remanded in custody yesterday for 15 days by a Haifa Magistrates Court.

Police said the suspect, Shadi Yusef Shaban, 21, of Sakhnin in Galilee, has admitted stabbing Almagor to death.

Shaban claimed in court, however, that he only admitted stealing the victim's car and that the admission to murder was forced out of him after he was beaten during interrogation.

The blood-stained body of Almagor, 42, was found Wednesday morning by his brother at the victim's house in Haifa's Dania district. Police said it appeared that Almagor and Shaban were involved in a sexual relationship.

Two other men suspected of helping Shaban hide evidence were also brought to court yesterday.

Sammi Saad Hadiri, 20, of Sakhnin, who rented an apartment with Shaban in Haifa, was remanded for six days, and Lutfy Nimr Khaluf, 26, a former collaborator who lives in Haifa, was remanded for three days.

Athletes' families seek public bridge inquiry

By ARYEH DEAN COHEN and news agencies

The families of four Australians killed in the Maccabiah bridge collapse in July have called on the government to conduct a public inquiry or face years of litigation.

They have written to Deputy Education Minister Moshe Peled calling for an independent inquiry into the Maccabiah World Union, the organizer of the games, which is partly funded by the government.

A spokesman for Peled said yesterday that the ministry was still looking into the call for an independent inquiry, but that it is "leaning toward" supporting such a position.

Colin Elterman, the father of Sacha Elterman, 15, who is still in serious condition in a Sydney hospital, said the union had refused to admit liability for the collapse, and families of the victims had received only sporadic payments of compensation from Maccabiah authorities.

"The families want someone independent to take a vacuum cleaner and run it right through the executive of the games organizers to suck out the bad parts," Elterman said.

Six Australian Maccabi officials

— including the head of Australian Maccabi — have resigned in protest over the treatment of the families.

Maccabi Australia president Tom Goldman and other Australian officials have backed the call for an independent inquiry and for the resignation of the union officials involved. Goldman is expected here Sunday to attend the World Maccabi meeting of presidents. Australian Maccabi is reportedly waiting for the outcome of that meeting before deciding whether to withdraw from the Maccabi World Union.

Two weeks ago State Attorney Edna Arbel released a police report which was expected to result in the indictment of five people, including games organizer Yoram Eyal. But the families are not satisfied.

In their letter, they said they had "yet to receive from the MWU any expression of remorse or recognition of any legal or moral responsibility."

"If a comprehensive investigation into the affairs of the MWU is not undertaken and the organization not cleaned out, the pressure from ourselves and the Israeli people, together with years of litigation, will cripple the MWU, and Israel will be the big loser," they said in the letter.

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We are deeply saddened
by the sudden passing of
our friend and the liberator of Jerusalem

UZI NARKISS

We extend our heartfelt
and sincere condolences
to Mrs. Esther Narkiss and the entire family.

The Makuya Movement



The World Zionist Organization



The Jewish Agency for Israel

mourn the death of

Maj. Gen (Res.) UZI NARKISS

Member of the Executive of the National Institutions,
a Zionist and man of deeds, who worked diligently in the
cause of immigration

Our condolences to the family.

Charles (Corky) Goodman
Chairman, Board of Governors

Avraham Burg
Chairman of the Executive

The Members of the
Executive of the National Institutions

With deep sorrow we announce the passing of
our dear aunt and great-aunt

CELIA MENDELSON (Greenwald - Fass)

after a long illness bravely borne.

The funeral took place on
Tuesday, December 16, 1997 (17 Kislev, 5758)

Nitsa and Albert Maier and family
Yitzhak and Ruth Greenwald and family
Stella Freedman and family
Blossom and Philip Copperman and family
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Our sincere condolences to the family on
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The funeral took place on December 18, 1997 in Netanya.
Shiva: 15 Rehov Hadaliot, Ramat Poleg, Netanya

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We regret to announce the passing of
Dr. BERNARD CLYMAN

The funeral took place Thursday evening,
December 18 (20 Kislev) at Har Hamenuchot.
Shiva at 6/8 Kfar Ivri Street, Jerusalem.

The Family

Clinton extends US presence in Bosnia

US President Bill Clinton announced a new extension of US military involvement in Bosnia-Herzegovina yesterday, saying troops will remain there as part of a NATO-led peacekeeping force beyond his earlier deadline of June 1998.

"A full and fair reading of Bosnia's history and honest assessment of the progress of the last 23 months simply refutes the proposition that the Dayton peace agreement cannot work," Clinton said at the White House.

"But if we pull out before the job is done, Bosnia will almost certainly fall back into violence, chaos, and ultimately a war every bit as bloody as one that was stopped."

Meanwhile, NATO said its peacekeeping force in Bosnia had captured two Bosnian Croat war crimes suspects overnight, exchanging fire with one of the men after he resisted arrest.

"SFOR [the NATO-led multinational peacekeeping force] detained two Bosnian Croats, Vlatko Kupreskic and Anto Furundzija, who are indicted for war crimes by the International Criminal Tribunal for former Yugoslavia," NATO Secretary General Javier Solana said in a statement.

A NATO spokesman said

Kupreskic had been wounded during an exchange of fire with SFOR troops and was undergoing surgery.

Furundzija was already on his way to The Hague, where both are wanted by the international tribunal.

"[Kupreskic] resisted arrest and shot at [SFOR] troops who returned fire. He was [hit] several times and is undergoing surgery," the spokesman said.

He said Kupreskic and Furundzija were part of a group of eight Croats accused of participating in a massacre in April 1993 in and around the village of Ahmici in which 103 Moslem civilians, including 33 women and children, were killed.

According to the indictment, every Moslem house in the village was burned down and unarmed civilians were systematically shot. The spokesman said the other six Croats had turned themselves in on October 6.

"Kupreskic was on the open indictment for crimes committed in 1993 in Lasva Valley in central Bosnia, systematic attacks on the town of Vitez, Ahmici and eight other villages in the region, and detention and murder of the civilian population," said Alex Ivanko, UN spokesman in Sarajevo.

"Furundzija was not on the open indictment and we still don't know what he was accused of by The Hague," he said.

Western reporters who covered the bitter 10-month war between the Bosnian Croats and Moslems in the Lasva Valley in 1993 said Furundzija was the commander of "The Jokers," one of the two paramilitary units operating in the area.

Solana said he had been kept fully informed by US Army Gen. Wesley Clark, supreme allied commander of NATO forces in Europe, and was following the situation closely.

"This action was undertaken in accordance with SFOR's mandate which authorizes it to detain such persons when encountered in the course of its duties," Solana said. "We will not tolerate any behavior by any party contrary to the peace agreement," he added.

Solana praised the SFOR troops and their commanders for their "professionalism and dedication" in carrying out the action.

"As confirmed this week by NATO foreign ministers, SFOR will continue its firm and even-handed approach to implementing its mandate and supporting civil implementation," he said.

(News agencies)

Irish to release 9 IRA prisoners

DUBLIN (Reuters) - The Irish government said yesterday it will this week free nine Irish Republican Army prisoners early, including a man named at its trial more than 20 years ago as the IRA's main organizer in Britain.

The release, set for today at a top security jail near Dublin, was apparently meant to boost peace talks seeking an end to years of strife in Northern Ireland.

Sinn Fein, the political arm of the IRA which wants an end to British rule of the province, called the decision "a positive step," Irish broadcaster RTE said.

Sinn Fein leader Gerry Adams has said any peace settlement must include the release of IRA members.

But the pro-British Democratic Unionist Party, representing the province's Protestant majority,

said the move was a "sop to the IRA," RTE said.

British and Irish leaders Tony Blair and Bertie Ahern have voiced optimism that the talks could end nearly 30 years of bombing and shooting which killed 3,200 people.

But negotiators broke for Christmas on Tuesday without agreeing an agenda for the next round in January.

The Dublin justice department said the nine men were being freed on condition they kept the peace and did nothing to upset those affected by their crimes.

Among them was Brendan Dowd, 48, who was moved to a prison in Ireland in 1996 after serving 20 years of a life sentence in Britain for conspiracy to murder and causing explosions. At his trial he was said to be the IRA's

main organizer in Britain.

Another man due for early release from a life sentence was Sean Kinsella, who the Times said was convicted of murder in 1974.

The other seven had been due to be freed between mid-1998 and August 2001 from the prison in Portlaoise, about 80 km southwest of the capital.

Local media reported that Dowd at one stage said his unit was responsible for a tavern bombing in Guildford, England which killed four people in 1974.

British authorities jailed three men and one woman for the blast who became known as the "Guildford Four."

Proven innocent and pardoned in 1989, the four walked free. Their case became the subject of the film, *In the Name of the Father*.

Greeks search Mt. Olympus for missing Ukrainian plane

SALONIKA (Reuters) - Greek search planes, troops and farmers on tractors combed rugged terrain near Mount Olympus yesterday for a Ukrainian airliner with 70 people aboard which vanished from radar screens as it descended to land.

Ukraine's Aerosweet Airlines said its Russian-built Yakovlev 42 plane, which has a capacity to seat 120, was on a scheduled flight from Kiev to the northern Greek city of Salonika with 62 passengers and eight crew when it disappeared.

"It had reported no trouble till its last contact with the control tower, minutes before it disappeared," Aerosweet's station manager in Athens, Efi Papachristopoulou said.

The passenger list showed more than 40 passengers were Greek and most of the rest were Ukrainian, she said. There were

two babies and four children among the passengers.

Greek media said it was feared the plane had crashed in the snow-covered mountains around Salonika. About nine hours after the aircraft vanished there was still no official report of a crash.

Greek civil aviation officials said an emergency plan had been put in force, with land, air and sea searches launched immediately after the plane's disappearance.

"We continue to look for it and all possible areas are being searched," civil aviation deputy commander George Soulidakis told reporters.

Defense Ministry sources said heavy fog was hindering efforts to locate any wreckage of the plane.

Two Greek air force Hercules C-130 planes joined all-weather helicopters in scanning the area southwest of Salonika, where temperatures dropped sharply this

week, for any sign of the Ukrainian aircraft. The navy sent a ship to the area to look for possible wreckage in the sea.

Army units were joined by farmers on tractors as they searched the mountains through the night, using flares and flashlights, witnesses said.

Who's Thabo Mbeke?

If you are South African and people ask you "What happens after Nelson Mandela?" you can now answer with confidence, "Thabo Mbeke." And if you want to know what that means, read Mandela's farewell speech to the African National Congress this week. After its fuzzy, feel-good transition to Mandela democracy, South Africa is in for a rude awakening to start the new century.

If you don't know much about Mandela's anointed successor, don't feel ignorant. Nobody else knows too much about him either, including we foreign-affairs watchers who have been keeping half an eye on Mbeke for two years, ever since it became clear he was virtually running the government.

A few things are obvious about Mbeke. He is a brilliant economist, a graduate of Sussex University in England. He was a member of the South African Communist Party and used it for an astute, pragmatic climb to power. He outran former rival Cyril Ramaphosa, the ex-ANC secretary-general who quit politics for business.

But what?

His father, Govan, was in jail with Mandela. When the ANC was banned, Mbeke took his struggle abroad, shuffling between Zambia and England, quietly pressuring the world to pile sanctions on the apartheid regime. At 55, Mbeke has a long political life ahead of him.

So where is the "but...?" This is not Nelson Mandela. Mark II. Mandela is the rainbow warrior - a man who may be the only truly color-blind person in Africa. Mbeke is black African first, second, and third - and South Africa's blacks have those priorities. As far as we know, there are no whites on his staff.

"Whites will have to find new entrepreneurial roles under Mbeke, rather than as advisers to government," one of the country's top constitutional experts, Prof. Dennis Davis, told me on a recent visit to Tel Aviv. "If you ask me will my son or daughter advise the government if they wanted to under Mbeke, I would say, probably no. Nor might they be appointed chief justice. But they should be free to go the entrepreneurial way - the Bill Gates way - and that will be OK," said Davis. "That can be better for the country."

Queen's speech

Here's Mbeke himself at the ANC Congress this week: "The message is - the revolution has not been completed."

We still need to organize ourselves to ensure that we achieve those things for which our movement was established. The struggle continues. Many who have become used to jolly and charming old President Nelson were taken aback by the harshness of his own speech to the ANC.

But they missed the point - Mbeke has for a long time been writing Mandela's policy speeches.

Column One



Thomas O'Dwyer

Mandela's farewell address was like the queen's address to parliament - the voice is theirs, the words not. At every turn, said Mandela-Mbeke, the ANC is being foiled by those committed to maintaining white privilege. "White society in general, white politicians, business, the judiciary, the media, the church, do not want to explain their involvement in the maintenance and perpetuation of the apartheid system..." All this betrays white society's hostility to the new democratic South Africa. "Is this the same Mandela who has spent the last few years cajoling and charming the grumpy and intransigent... Afrikaaner diehards into his rainbow republic? No, these are the words of the next president."

Mbeke is known to have the contempt of an old communist intellectual for the liberal media. Only last week, he again suggested the Orwellian practice of broadcasting unedited government bulletins as television news. His aides are enthusiastic about being able to dictate what is news, and what news is not in the public interest.

That man again

The media are deliberately trying to undermine the "revolution," said Mandela. "During the last three years it has become perfectly clear that the bulk of the mass media in our country has set itself up as a force opposed to the ANC." Is this the same Mandela who is idolized by the world media, and who so depended on it to bring the struggle against apartheid to every nation on earth? A South African asked me this week whom, if not Mandela, Mbeke resembles. Easy - he is a suave, clever, revolutionary, intellectually intolerant, African nationalist. Who else but Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe?

Footnote: The South African ambassador last night hosted a farewell reception for counselor Henri Raubenheimer. For his outstanding assistance to journalists covering his country's affairs, a simple and heartfelt "Thank You" to Mr. Raubenheimer.

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Opposition leader wins South Korean election

By DAVID BRUNNSTROM

SEOUL (Reuters) — Veteran opposition leader Kim Dae-jung was assured yesterday of becoming South Korea's next president after a desperately close vote-count, but will take the helm of a debt-laden country deeply mired in financial crisis.

Governing party candidate Lee Hoi-chang conceded victory to his rival last night and promised to give the next administration his full support.

"I offer my congratulations and respect to candidate Kim Dae-jung, who had the glory of winning the election," Lee said in a statement.

Kim is not due to take office until February 25, when incumbent President Kim Young-sam completes his five-year term.

He was constitutionally barred from seeking re-election. Despite his defeat in yesterday's vote, Lee's Grand National Party still has a simple majority in the National Assembly which was elected last year for a four-year term.

State television said that, with just over 94 percent of votes counted, Kim had 40.4 percent of the vote, or 9.75 million votes, while Lee won 38.6 percent, or 9.31 million votes. The third main candidate, Rhee In-je, split the majority party's vote,

securing about 19 percent.

Earlier Lee's spokesman had forecast defeat, saying: "We accept the result as a scolding by the people and we will try to be reborn and show the people a new face."

Analysts say the victorious Kim will be accepting a poisoned chalice. The election was overshadowed by a financial crisis that forced South Koreans to set aside national pride and seek a record-breaking bailout package of nearly \$60 billion from the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

It was the 74-year-old Kim's fourth stab at the presidency and probably his last chance of victory.

In fact, some analysts have questioned whether the veteran dissident has the stamina for a five-year term.

But for Kim himself, the day he has awaited for so long was tinged with tragedy. His younger brother, Kim Dae-eui, 70, died of liver disease on Wednesday.

Officials at Kim's party, the National Congress for New Politics, said he would abstain from making celebratory remarks, partly as a mark of respect for his brother.

Kim had vowed that, if he was elected, he would amend the constitution to change South Korea's current presidential system to a parliamentary system by the end of 1999.

Yeltsin returns to work feeling 'great'

MOSCOW (Reuters) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin, impatient to rejoin the political fray after a viral infection, was feeling "great" yesterday and said he would resume work today.

Yeltsin, 66, met Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin at the Barvikha sanatorium outside Moscow where he has been recovering and said his top priority in the coming weeks is pushing the government's 1998 budget through Russia's hostile parliament.

"Everything is all right with me. My illness was not related with any heart problems. It was indeed a cold and there had been danger

of complications," Yeltsin told Russian reporters in televised remarks ahead of his meeting with Chernomyrdin.

Itar-Tass news agency quoted him as saying: "I am ending my stay here. Tomorrow I return to work. And from the new year I will return to a full-scale schedule."

Some media have speculated that Yeltsin might have suffered a recurrence of the heart problems which forced him to undergo a bypass operation in November last year.

The Kremlin repeatedly denied the rumors and said the president, who was admitted to Barvikha on

December 10, was suffering from an acute viral respiratory infection brought on by a cold.

Asked how Yeltsin felt yesterday, a Kremlin spokesman told Reuters: "Great." Yeltsin made clear the draft 1998 budget would be the main focus of his attention in the coming weeks.

"We must have a confirmed budget in the new year," he said in his televised comments.

The opposition-dominated State Duma, the lower house of parliament, passed the budget in its first reading after Yeltsin made an unprecedented visit to the chamber and personally urged deputies to back it. But the second reading,

originally scheduled for yesterday, has been delayed until next Wednesday, making it unlikely the budget can come into force by the start of 1998.

In another sign of political good will, Yeltsin yesterday approved a long-disputed law on government after reaching a "gentleman's agreement" with parliamentary leaders that they would accept key amendments after he had signed it.

It is very unusual for Yeltsin to sign a law before it has cleared all the parliamentary hurdles. The new law maps out the scope of the powers of Russia's state institutions.



South Korean Confucian scholars wearing traditional costumes line up to cast their ballots in Nonsan City, south of Seoul yesterday.

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A tale of two maps

The atmosphere surrounding Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's meeting with US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright yesterday was that of a boy having to face his teacher without having completed his homework. The US, playing the forgiving teacher, had already given Netanyahu an extension on his assignment — producing a second redeployment map — until next month, when he has been invited to meet with President Bill Clinton in Washington. What has not been sufficiently recognized, however, is the revolutionary nature of Israel's negotiation with itself.

At the heart of this negotiation is the tale of two maps: the map drawn by National Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon and another one championed by Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai. Sharon's map retains a 20-km strip of the Jordan Valley, a seven-to-10 km band along the eastern portion of the Green Line, three east-west bands across Judea and Samaria, all water sources, and all settlements and access roads to them. Sharon's "map of interests," accordingly, holds on to about 65 percent of the territories — though Sharon refuses to cite percentages.

Mordechai and Foreign Minister David Levy are backing a somewhat less ambitious map compiled by the Defense Ministry, which reportedly requires that Israel retain about 55 percent of the territories for security reasons. The main difference between the maps is not a matter of percentages, but the fact that the defense establishment's map leaves about 42 settlements — one third of the total, populated by about 30,000 people — as islands within Palestinian controlled territory.

In essence, the military planners and their cabinet backers are saying that dozens of settlements are more of a security headache than an asset. Though heretical from a political point of view, such a judgment is not surprising from the narrow standpoint of military cost-benefit analysis. Given a choice, the military would rather defend neat linear borders than isolated settlements surrounded by Arab villages. In even stricter military terms, the mostly empty Judean Desert and Jordan Valley, along with points along the mountain ridge, are what the IDF needs most to defend Israel's eastern flank.

The real question at the political level is whether the narrow lens with which the military views its

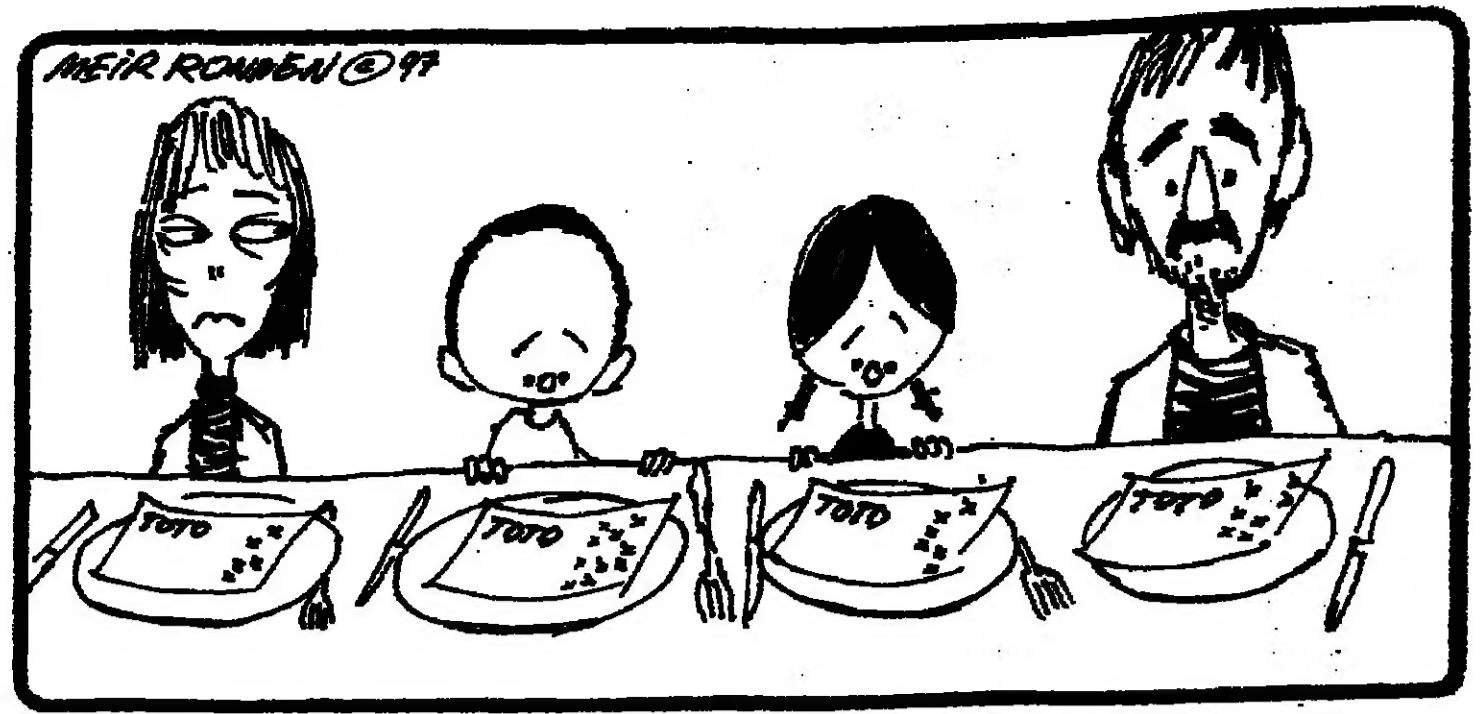
needs fully captures Israel's interests when embarking on final-status negotiations. Put another way, is the only justification for Israel holding on to territory a military one?

In Sharon's view, and perhaps that of a majority of the cabinet, the settlements themselves define the extent of Israel's interests at least as much as stark military considerations. That this approach is leading to a dilemma has been pointed out by Third Way MK Alex Lubotsky, himself a settler, even in choosing which 10 percent or so to withdraw from in the second redeployment. Lubotsky has raised a potential conflict between the settlement movement and the very value it has voted with its very homes to advance: retaining as much as possible of the Land of Israel.

As Lubotsky points out, Israel has to choose between withdrawing from the spaces between the Arab populations in western Judea and Samaria, or from the largely empty areas of the Judean Desert and Jordan Valley. If Israel chooses to try to hold on to every settlement, it will no doubt have to give up more empty territory. If it instead gives up smaller amounts of land that are more valuable to the Palestinians — because they provide more continuity to the territory they control — then Israel can retain more of the empty areas.

With the Sharon wing threatening to bring down a government that compromises the "national interest" and the Levy wing warning that it will walk away from any government that is not "serious about peace," Netanyahu's margin for maneuver has become razor thin. In such a situation, long-term strategic considerations tend to fall by the wayside in favor of crafting whatever will pass, even in a discussion explicitly dedicated to formulating long-term strategy.

This is a dangerous situation, because Lubotsky is right that Israel may have to decide now whether it will give up more of the empty territory to the east or to further isolate some of the settlements in the west. The Palestinians could spare Israel this dilemma by not abiding by their Oslo commitments — thinking that Israel will not be able to stick by its demand for reciprocity — but that would be a terrible mistake on their part. So, too, would be a failure on the part of United States to convince the Palestinians that Israel is not the only party that must confront tough dilemmas in order to deliver on its commitments.



Too many mistakes

MOSHE ARENS

The government's seemingly endless discussions on the second redeployment have digressed into debates about what Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu should present to US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright in their meeting in Paris and what Israel's position should be when the permanent-status negotiations eventually begin. In the process, serious errors are being committed and unfortunate precedents are being set that are going to haunt us in the years to come and that are liable to do Israel's position serious harm.

Netanyahu, with Foreign Minister David Levy breathing down his neck, has been preparing for his trip to Paris, expecting to submit for Albright's approval the extent of the second withdrawal that Israel is prepared to discuss with the Palestinians. She, in turn, has already let it be known that the area to be turned over to Palestinian control should encompass a double-digit percentage of Judea and Samaria.

Although the US has been involved in Middle East peace negotiation for many years, Israel's proposals to its Arab negotiating partners have never before been submitted to the US for prior approval. In the past, the US has mediated and cajoled, but it has always been clear that it is for the Arabs, and not the US, to accept or reject Israel's positions. From now on Yasser Arafat will have reason to believe that he can

simply sit back, while Albright does his work for him. How have we succeeded in maneuvering ourselves into this embarrassing situation?

BREAKING the unwritten law that in Middle East negotiations, maps are not produced until the final stages of the negotiations, Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai and National Infrastructure Minister Ariel Sharon have shown the cabinet

day's newspapers, this discussion simply reveals, for all to see, Israel's opening positions in the final-status negotiations, thus seriously compromising its position when these all-important negotiations eventually take place. Can there be a more serious mistake?

Worse yet, the IDF has been dragged into the picture, with Mordechai's map presumably representing the IDF's views. Whereas it is perfectly proper for the government to seek the IDF's

Our government has lost all sense of direction and maybe even basic common sense

competing maps with their respective suggestions for Israel's borders within the framework of a permanent settlement.

If the discussions of the cabinet could be kept secret, it might seem reasonable that a decision on the extent of the second redeployment should be preceded by a discussion of what Israel's position on its permanent borders will be when the final-status negotiations eventually take place. However, since these discussions are reproduced almost word for word in the world's media, and the maps presented appear in the following

considered opinion on the security aspect of a specific issue, it is totally inappropriate and unprecedented for the IDF to take a position on what Israel's permanent borders should be.

What's more, there are probably as many opinions on this subject in the IDF as there are generals. For the IDF to come up with a list of towns, villages, and settlements in Judea and Samaria that it claims have no importance from the security point of view is downright scandalous. Next, we could expect the IDF to come up with a similar list for the cities and

villages in Israel itself. Even though the list is devoid of any sense or meaning, we can be sure that it will be produced by the Palestinians in forthcoming negotiations, and maybe even by Albright in her meeting with Netanyahu in Paris. We get the impression that our government and most of its ministers have lost all sense of direction and maybe even basic common sense.

Before the ministers choose between the maps of Mordechai and Sharon, they are planning to tour Judea and Samaria, to see the area for themselves, I suggest that they pay attention to two particular locations, Jericho and Hebron. They are stark reminders of mistakes already made and irreparable damage already done.

In Jericho, what was supposed to serve as Israel's security border in the Jordan Valley has been breached by the Rabin government's agreement to turn the area over to the Palestinian Authority. In Hebron — this ancient city of such great religious and historic importance to the Jewish people — the agreement concluded by the Netanyahu government has left the Jewish community in isolated pockets that make it impossible for it to breathe and develop, and place the lives of the men, women, and children living there in jeopardy. How many more mistakes can we afford?

The writer is a former foreign and defense minister.

The right of return

MARK A. HELLER

If Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu's call for accelerated talks on a permanent-status agreement with the Palestinians is serious, it is important that he and the rest of the country appreciate the need to think beyond the question of maps.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is certainly about territory, and the demarcation of boundaries will naturally assume a central place in deliberations about permanent status, just as it does in current deliberations about the further redeployment of the interim agreement. Moreover, many of the other permanent-status issues, such as settlements, some of the security arrangements, and even Jerusalem, are actually subsumed by the decision on the future border between Israel and the Palestinian state that will emerge from any permanent-status agreement.

There is, however, one major issue that is related only indirectly to the territorial dimension of the conflict — the refugees. And unless this issue is also addressed, a permanent-status agreement, however detailed in other respects, will not provide the definitive resolution of the conflict that is the entire purpose of the peace process.

The refugee issue is specifically listed in the Declaration of Principles as a permanent-status issue, but it has been practically ignored in all the negotiations since 1993. One reason is that the PLO itself has not pushed very hard. The DOP, by transplanting the PLO from the "outside" to the "inside," has focused Palestinian attention and energy on state-building. Progress in the peace process now promises tangible achievements for the Palestinian leadership and population in the West Bank and Gaza, but virtually nothing beyond symbolic satisfaction for Palestinians elsewhere, and there is little incentive to dramatize this point by pressing for negotiations that are unlikely to lead anywhere.

Secondly, the refugee question is not only the issue least connected to boundaries; it is also the issue least susceptible to settlement on a bilateral basis. Israel and the PA alone cannot agree to dissolve UNRWA or provide either the political or financial resources needed to rehabilitate and absorb Palestinians not under their jurisdiction. In addition to the 1.2 million refugees in Jordan (including about 250,000 in camps), there are about 350,000 in Lebanon, and

almost as many in Syria. In the last two countries (and in most other Arab countries), Palestinians have no citizenship; in Lebanon, they are even denied regular residency rights and work permits. Unless they all move to the Palestinian state, which is highly unlikely, or to Israel, which is even less likely, some normalization of their status will be necessary, and this requires the involvement of the host-coun-

try governments. But Syria and Lebanon have thus far refused to take part in the multilateral working group on refugees.

Finally, Israel itself has been extremely reluctant even to think about the refugee issue, much less begin to negotiate it. Israel's approach reflects not just a negotiating stance, but a national narrative. According to this narrative, if the Arabs had not opposed partition by force in 1948, there would have been no war, and if there had been no war, there would have been no refugees. Thus, responsibility for the creation of the refugee problem lies with the Arabs, and so does responsibility for finding a solution.

But even if this narrative is true in the sense that Arab rejectionism was the enabling cause, it is also true that in many cases, Palestinians became refugees, not because of general panic related to the war, but because of specific actions by Israeli forces. The most celebrated case is documented in the second edition of Yitzhak Rabin's memoirs, which restores a passage, deleted by the censor from the first edition, describing the forced evacuation of Arabs from Lod and Ramle.

IN any case, this is not just a historical investigation, and even if the refugee issue is not Israel's responsibility, it is Israel's problem. For whatever the precise division of responsibility, it is clearly in Israel's interest to ensure that the refugee question does not persist as a canker on the body of a permanent-status agreement and remain as an obstacle to the finality that

dispersion of refugees is central to the Palestinian national narrative, some recognition of the human tragedy and of Israel's role in it will eventually play a part, as well.

These are immensely complicated and emotionally-laden questions. On the material dimension, for example, it will be necessary to determine what compensation will be given to whom on what basis, how a compensation regime will be administered and financed, and what arrangements will apply to Jews who lost property in Arab countries.

And on the moral dimension, any acknowledgment by Israel of its role in the refugee tragedy will need to elicit some Palestinian recognition of the suffering inflicted on Israel during all the years of the conflict.

At this point, more uncertainty surrounds the refugee issue than any other question on the agenda. It is not even clear who needs to be involved in its resolution, except that the Palestinian interlocutor must be, not the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank and Gaza, but the PLO, as the representative of the entire Palestinian people. Tackling the issue will take a long time and require a lot of creative thought, involving the slaying of some sacred cows on both sides.

But unless that is done, there can be no real reconciliation, hence, no real peace. It is therefore vital to recognize the problem and begin thinking about it now.

The writer is senior research associate at the Jaffee Center for Strategic Studies at Tel Aviv University.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FRENCH POLICY

Sir — Your distinguished newspaper published an editorial, "Buy American" (December 18), on El Al's choice between Airbus and Boeing which, instead of limiting itself to economic arguments — or perhaps because of a lack of such arguments in favor of Boeing — goes out of its way to assert that Airbus must not be purchased because of France's foreign policy.

Leaving aside the well-known fact that Airbus is a European consortium, consisting of British, French, German and Spanish companies, let me make a few points clear:

1) France does not "oppose US foreign policy." The relationship between the two oldest allies has seldom been as close as it is today.

whether at heads of state or foreign ministers level. We do not see France's (or for that matter Europe's) action abroad as antagonizing that of the United States, but as complementing it.

This is especially true in the Middle East, where France, far from being "the most regular European proponent of the Arab line" supports, together with its European partners and the US, all efforts aiming at establishing a lasting coexistence between countries of the area. Does that really "jeopardize Israel's interests?"

2) There is no "lobby in the UN Security Council for lifting international sanctions against Iraq." We unreservedly share the unani-

mous view of the Council that Iraq must fulfill its obligations under the relevant UN resolutions, and that UNSCOM's control of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction has not yet come to an end.

3) By signing a private commercial deal with Iran, the French company Total did not infringe non-existent UN sanctions against that country.

The so-called "American sanctions" are unilateral decisions which cannot, under international law, be implemented outside US boundaries.

AMBASSADOR JEAN-NOEL DE BOUILLANE DE LACOSTE, The Embassy of France, Tel Aviv.

THE TURKISH THREAT TO CYPRUS

Sir — The Turkish view that the soon-to-be acquired by Cyprus 5-300 anti-aircraft missile defense system presents a growing threat to its security ("Defense ties with Turkey bolstered," December 9) is ludicrous. It is not Cyprus that is occupying Turkey but the opposite. Turkey's army is nearly twice as large as the total population of Cyprus. Who is a threat to whom is easy to see.

When the Turks say that the S-300 ground-to-air missiles pose a threat to their security, what they in fact mean is that when deployed, the system will deny them absolute control of the skies that they now enjoy. It will deny them the immunity to attack or coerce Cyprus at will, a practice they have been accustomed to since 1964. And they don't like it. They want Cyprus to be their satrapy and themselves the unchallenged hegemony. We are determined to resist with all our means

this neo-Ottoman mentality to dominate us.

Cyprus is finally learning from the Israeli experience and tries against goliathian odds to buttress its defenses. Since it has neither an air force nor a navy and since Turkey rejects outright President Clerides's far-reaching proposal to demilitarize Cyprus, then my country has no option but to rely on systems like the S-300 to defend itself against the real prospect of renewed Turkish attacks. The problem of Cyprus could have been solved years ago if Turkey were to decide to implement United Nations resolution 3212 of 1974 which was adopted unanimously by the international community, even with Turkey's positive vote. Your reporter conveniently also whitewashes one basic fact: there is no such thing as "Greek Cyprus" just as there is no "Turkish Cyprus." There is one Republic of Cyprus, part of the ter-

ritory of which is under 30,000 Turkish bayonets in total contravention of every accepted norm and international standard. Talk that Cyprus is a threat to Turkey is a sad joke and borders on the absurd.

AMBASSADOR EURIPIDES L. EVRIVADES, Embassy of Cyprus, Tel Aviv.

A DILIGENT STUDENT

Sir — I was Sarah Netanyahu's English teacher at the ORT Greenberg school in Kiryat Tivon. I knew her as a quiet, well-behaved, diligent student.

Either Sarah has undergone a basic personality change, or else she is the victim of a monumental which hunt. I tend to believe the latter.

ANNA SOTTO, Tivon.

FROM OUR ARCHIVES

65 years ago: On December 19, 1932, The Palestine Post reported that the reclaimed from the sea area in Haifa Harbor would be treated as a State Dominion and would be administered by the Department of Lands.

A big fire destroyed Tel Aviv's box factory. The second such outbreak in four days caused considerable damage.

50 years ago: On December 19, 1947, The Palestine Post reported that Moshe Shertok,

head of the Jewish Agency's Political Department, continued to submit regular reports on the security problems in Palestine to the UN Security Council. He urged the Council to allow Palestine Jewry the right to defend themselves.

The Palestine Post published the full text of the UN Resolution on Partition, as adopted by the General Assembly.

There were numerous shooting incidents in Jerusalem and Haifa. The body of Emmanuel Weiner,

38, was found in Silwan village (Kfar Hashiloah).

25 years ago: On December 19, 1972, The Palestine Post reported that four rockets were fired at the US Embassy in Beirut, causing substantial damage, but no casualties.

In Cairo Egyptian Chief of Staff General Sa'ad Eddin Shazli indicated Egypt was planning for a long-term confrontation with Israel.

Alexander Zvielli

ملء امنه الاصل

Teheran Spring

GERALD M. STEINBERG

After two decades of radicalism and revolution, there are signs that the Iranian public is tired of Islamic fundamentalism and international isolation. A relatively liberal candidate (in Iranian terms) won the presidential elections, reflecting demands for economic reform and growth.

Millions of Iranian men and women participated in wild celebrations after the Iranian team won a World Cup preliminary match and advanced to the finals. At the Islamic summit in Teheran, President Mohammed Khatami, advocated an "Islamic civil society" and admitted that Islam has much to learn from the West. He has repeatedly called for a dialogue with the American people, and there are some official contacts between

Islamic summit in Teheran, which marked Iran's first steps towards ending its international isolation. In their speeches, both the Palestinian and Syrian leaders reflected the concern that after 20 years, the Iranians may be abandoning their radical anti-Western and anti-Israeli policies.

Arafat praised the "sisterly Islamic Republic of Iran..." whose people, supreme authority, leadership, and government we esteem and love. He reminded his audience of Iran's role in "promoting our crucial causes, particularly the Palestinian cause and the cause of holy Jerusalem." (In this tirade that demonstrates how little has changed since the Oslo Accords, Arafat demanded help in "delivering holy Jerusalem from the monster represented by

As long as the Iranian government's actions do not change, the policy of isolation must be maintained

Washington and Teheran. This has raised the possibility, still quite remote, of a rapprochement, ending Iran's isolation and the economic boycott.

To repair its relations with the Americans, the Iranian leadership will have to go a long way toward reversing its revolutionary policies.

The US government will not end sanctions unless there is a halt in support for terror, including training, funding, and weapons for Hizbullah, Hamas, and the Islamic Jihad. The US will also demand that Teheran completely halt its efforts to acquire weapons of mass destruction and long-range missiles.

At this time, none of these changes can be considered likely — at best, they are remote possibilities. Khatami is still locked in a power struggle with the radical fundamentalists, such as Ayatollah Ali Khamenei (the supreme leader), who fear loss of power and continue to view the US as "the Great Satan."

Although he is billed as a moderate, Khatami's statements about the American government are still laced with hostile rhetoric, and he refers to Israel as "a terrorist and fascist state" (while also declaring that Iran will not oppose any peace agreements that the Arabs accept). In terms of substance, there is no clear evidence that the cooperation between Iran and Russia in the development of missiles has declined.

Nevertheless, for those who are looking for signs of hope, there is enough to build a case for possible change. Twenty years ago, Iran suddenly went from being America's policeman in the Persian Gulf, with a high level of cooperation with Israel, to a virulent anti-American and anti-Israeli state led by fundamentalist Shi'ite clergy. Although unlikely, a similar transformation in reverse cannot be ruled out.

HOWEVER remote the possibility of a reversal of Iranian policies, there are indications that Yasser Arafat and Hafez Assad are very nervous. The Palestinians and Syrians sent large delegations and sought to play central roles in the recent

continuous and advancing settlements and the threat of Judaization."

Let's be realistic: the Iranians are tempted to abandon the Palestinian cause, Arafat reminded them that the threats from the West "should make us close ranks and step up efforts within the framework of an Islamic solidarity and joint action in defense of our joint interests, the just and legitimate causes of our peoples and our Islamic nation..."

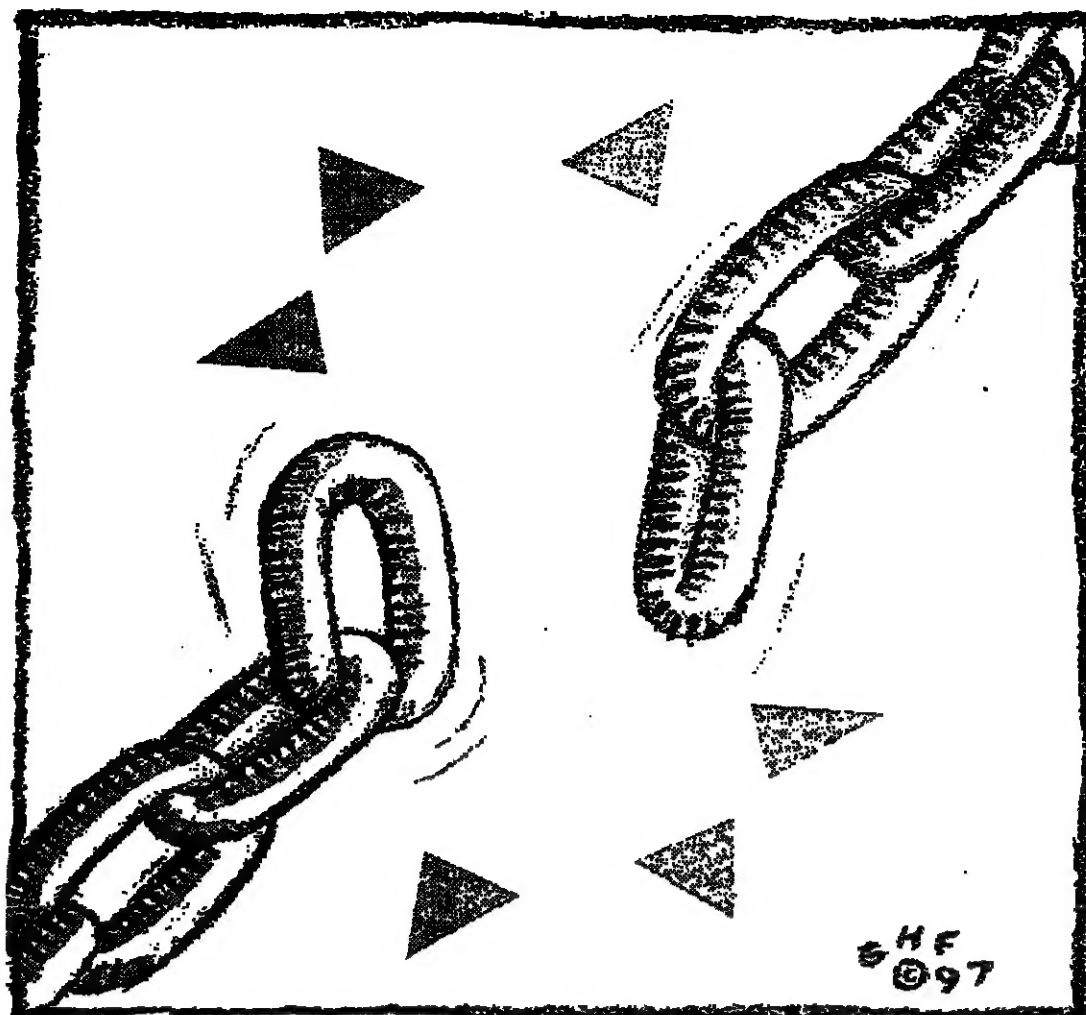
In his speech, Assad used many of the same themes, stressing the threats from Israel, and calling on the Islamic states to stop normalization with "the Zionists." The Syrians are dismayed by the growing cooperation between Israel and Turkey, and by the possibility, however remote, that Iran could eventually follow a similar path.

If Iran were to abandon the radical rejectionist camp, the Syrians would be more isolated than ever, and could be forced to follow the path of Egypt, Jordan, and other moderate Arab states in negotiating a peace treaty, including the very normalization that Assad has condemned.

Whatever fears Assad and Arafat may have, they are not sufficient to lead to an abrupt end in the policies of containment and isolation with respect to Iran. The anti-Israeli rhetoric is continuing, and there is also the possibility that Khatami may not be effective, may not be interested in ending Iranian hostility toward Israel, or that he could be removed from office by the Islamic establishment.

Iran still supports terrorism and continues its attempts to acquire missiles and weapons of mass destruction. So far, only the tone has changed, but not the substance. As long as the Iranian government's actions do not change, the policy of isolation must be maintained. However, both American and Israeli officials must also be very careful to avoid unnecessary actions or statements that could slam the door on what might become a Teheran Spring.

The writer is a senior associate at Bar-Ilan University's Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies.



The limits of family

JONATHAN ROSENBLUM

If the Jewish people are best described as a family, as David Hartman and others argue, then it is surely a highly dysfunctional one, whose members cannot keep from torturing one another like the characters in O'Neill's *A Long Day's Journey Into Night*. Calling one another "brother" and "sister" does not appear likely to turn us into one big, happy family anytime in the near future.

That impoverished sense of family is nevertheless enough, in Hartman's view, to require the scrapping of the religious status quo in Israel and the importation of American religious pluralism. The Jewish family, he argues, can only be preserved if the Jewish state adopts the position that "Jewish" is a term incapable of definition and confers equal legitimacy on the views of everyone born of a Jewish mother (or Jewish father for that matter). Tolerance is once again elevated to the status of the highest, if not only, religious value. But even on its own terms, Hartman's family metaphor is an argument for preservation of the status quo.

Imagine that an eccentric, but very rich, maiden aunt decided to adopt her household staff. Would her blood relatives recognize her new "children" as part of their family? The Reform movement, with its increasingly eccentric standards for conversion, is the national counterpart of the maiden aunt. Family cannot serve as a common bond when there are not even any agreed upon standards for determining membership.

It is precisely Hartman's view that "family" trumps all other values that underlies the disappearance of world Jewry. Once Jewish parents treated intermarriage as a calamity, and the intermarriage rate was low: 8% for American Jews in 1965, as opposed to a present rate soaring towards 60%.

Today, far from treating intermarriage as a tragedy, Jewish parents, aunts and uncles, siblings and cousins celebrate the nuptials — "for the sake of family." At most, an attempt is made to sprinkle some face-saving baptismal waters on the non-Jewish spouse, whose level of Jewish identity will not be appreciably less, and often greater, than that of the Jewish partner.

Rabbi Everett Gendler of North Andover, Massachusetts is not embarrassed to announce in the *New York Times* that he co-officiated at his daughter's wedding along with the groom's father, a Baptist minister. Should these bright young graduates of Harvard Law School be denied their moment in the *Times*? The nation is dying but the family is preserved.

THE precise nature of the Jewish familial bond, for Hartman, boils down to nothing more than a shared

history of suffering. What Salo Baron once termed the "lachrymose view of Jewish history" is thus wedded to minimalist religion. Nor is the connection accidental. As American Jews grow increasingly unable to distinguish their own religious beliefs from a vague ethical monotheism, the Holocaust becomes their primary claim to distinction — Jew as history's champion victim.

A long history of persecution, however, has proven a weak glue with which to hold together a fractious people. For one thing, the historical memory of today's TV generation is very short — measured in half-hour segments not millennia.

Does any sane person seek for himself to become one more link in the chain of suffering?

"For my children, the Holocaust is ancient history," says Jewish multi-millionaire Michael Steinhardt, as he announces a new initiative for Jewish education. A few years ago, I saw for myself the truth of Steinhardt's observation. I took my children to Yad Vashem on Tisha B'Av, where we shared the museum with a group of American teenagers. As they hurried through the record of demonic fury poured out on European Jewry, the question most on their minds was: "Where was Jennifer last night? Did you see who she was with?" They had long preceded us by the time we exited the hall and were out on the grass having a picnic.

I briefly considered mentioning to them that Jews have fasted on this day for nearly two thousand years as a sign of mourning for the destruction of the Temple. But I realized that if the Holocaust moved them so little, the loss of a Temple about which they know nothing, and in which they would have been appalled to learn — animal sacrifices were offered, was certainly far beyond their emotional grasp.

The second problem with the emphasis on Jewish suffering is that it is fundamentally illogical. What follows from our championship in persecution?

Does any sane person seek for himself to become one more link in the chain of suffering?

The reliance on Jewish suffering as if it argued for a particular course of action is more often than not dishonest, as well as illogical. More than twenty years ago, I was weeding avocados under a blistering sun

with a young kibbutznik about my age. He wanted to know whether I intended to live in Israel. When I asked him why I should, his only answer was Jews had suffered greatly throughout history and should therefore live in a Jewish state.

Even at the time, our history of suffering seemed a strange starting point for the atheist kibbutznik. Until very recent times, Jews were slaughtered primarily because of their stubborn refusal to betray their God. For their sacrifice, they gave concrete expression to the view that a life without Torah is not worth living. How, I wondered, can a modern Jew, who denies God's very existence and rejects any sacrifice in the name of the Torah, bootstrap his cause by reference to the martyrdom of our ancestors. For him, their choice of death was at best an admirable farce, totally beyond his comprehension.

Of course, awareness of our history is for some the impetus for a deeper investigation of their Judaism. They read the litany of pogroms, mass suicides, and forced exile in the Book of Fire at the Diaspora Museum, and ask themselves: How could my ancestors have chosen, in generation after generation, the near certainty of exile or pogrom for themselves and their children? What was the source of their power?

But unless they can move beyond history and tap into that power themselves, the momentary arousal to counsel parents. Teach them instead that it is the greatest privilege to be part of the sinner of humanity chosen to bear God's most precious gift to the world.

Only those who experience themselves as having been chosen for something other than suffering can transmit their Judaism to yet another generation.

History records that which is long gone and incapable of being retrieved. Where museums — the resting places of mummies — adorn temple and synagogue, one can be sure that Judaism has died inside.

For those, however, who view Sinai as the climactic moment in world history, there is no history as such, only an eternal present, a voice that continues to go out from Sinai every day. They live in communion with all generations of Jews, in ongoing conversation with Abaye and Rava, Rashi and Maimonides. Were those giants to be reborn today, they could instantly join the debate in any study hall.

Only that living Judaism, not some vague memory of past suffering, can preserve our people.

The writer is a Jerusalem Post columnist.

Middle Israel

AMOTZ ASA-EL

The settler tragedy

Whether it ends up encompassing 10 percent, 20%, or 6.5% of the West Bank, the impending Likud-sanctioned retreat will mark the tragic aftermath of yet another sad chapter in the history of Israeli elitism.

That a right-wing government would forfeit what its leaders have so frequently called "motherland-soil," should surprise no one. Likud leaders of any size and shape, from Binyamin Netanyahu, Yitzhak Shamir, Dan Meridor, and Ehud Olmert to Tzahi Hanegbi, Yehoshua Matza, Ruby Rivlin, and Dan Naveh all refrained from residing across the Green Line, despite their verbose nationalism. Considering this dubious record of arm-chair patriotism — which has its roots in the pre-statehood Revisionist movement's tendency to talk a lot and do little — the imminent retreat will be the natural

THE absurdity of the theology which accompanied the settler movement becomes even starker when one looks at its pseudo-folkish embrace of dubiously Jewish groups, from Peruvian Indians to Ethiopian Falash Mura. The sights of such groups roaming remote West Bank settlements, where most Israelis chose not to live, now looms as a sad testimony to the demise of Gush Emunim's original aspiration to become a beacon for mainstream Israel.

Equally symbolic is the conclusion of the second redeployment with the schism at Yeshivat Merkaz Harav, where the trinity of Torah, Jews, and Greater Israel was conceived. It is incredible to now see Rabbi Avraham Shapira, the former chief rabbi who cannot even keep his own yeshiva intact, pontificating to the government on how to manage this country's

As it stands to lose more physical turf Gush Emunim should also wonder why most Israelis rejected its gospel

sequel to the Likud's abandonment of Yamit 15 years ago.

None of this can be said of the national-religious public, which created, manned, and upheld the bulk of the trans-Green Line settlements. For them, the prospective pullback is indeed the emotional equivalent of parting with an amputated limb.

And yet their real tragedy is not in the soil they now stand to lose, but in the Middle Israeli public which they failed to conquer despite a 23-year effort to grab the national steering wheel. Now religious Zionists would do well to fathom the theological, social, and geopolitical roots of their debacle.

Much like the secular kibbutzniks who preceded them, the post-'67 settler leaders were fueled by a youthful avant garde's rebelliousness, conviction, and sense of destiny.

Inspired by the writings of Rabbi Avraham Yitzhak Kook, settler leaders saw Zionism as part of a divine plan whereby secularists would lead the restoration of Jewish sovereignty, only to ultimately conform with its newly-adopted religious norms.

Set against this backdrop, the '67 victory seemed to them like Redemption itself. Then, in '73, secular Israel's sudden loss of confidence was to them God's thick hint that the time had come for religious Zionism to assume national leadership. This conviction intensified after Labor's loss of power in 1977. The fusion with Menachem Begin was natural and effective; soon enough the territories were carpeted with scores of new, predominantly religious settlements.

That God might have no inkling of the divine plan they attributed to Him seemed impossible to Haim Druckman, Hanan Porat, Moshe Levinger, et al. And so, in '82, when in stark contradiction with their theology a secularly-led Israel was actually about to shed territories and settlements, they resorted to the delusion that some sudden cataclysm would turn events around.

Gush Emunim rabbis' frustration with history's refusal to follow their script became even more self-contradictory when, two years ago, they forbade soldiers to take part in redeploying military camps, and ended up downright pathetic when not one conscript actually followed their command.

But the most painful experience for Gush Emunim's founders these days should be the realization that those within the government most eager to satisfy Palestinian demands are non-Ashkenazi Foreign Minister David Levy and Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai.

For decades, the conventional wisdom among Gush Emunim leaders was that non-Ashkenazim were on their side. Now they should know better.

In this country, a political movement whose geographic obsessions resulted in social aloofness, and whose unselected leadership has always been exclusively led by such quintessential Ashkenazim as Levinger, Katzover, Domb, Fruman, Druckman, Wallerstein and Hendler, must end up marginalized. Just like Meretz.

Considering that this leadership is also exclusively religious, it ended up not only failing to lead mainstream Israel, but often eliciting a kind of resentment, not to say demonization, it did not deserve.

Theologically, as overly political religious sects have done so frequently throughout history, Gush Emunim also obstructed its followers' ability to soberly view the world around them. The Arab-Israeli conflict was interpreted as a re-enactment of the biblical showdown between Jacob and Esau. The thought that the Palestinians also have a cause was too difficult to reconcile with God's ostensible plans. Conversely, the notion of a modern state subsiding while economically aloof from its neighbors and shackled to exorbitant military expenditures, seemed natural.

Now the settler leadership is sufficiently experienced to understand that territorial retreats may indeed be carried out by Zionist leaders from either side of the political map. Still, its agenda — to settle anywhere and any time — has not changed. Hence the decision this week to seek Netanyahu's downfall, as if their cause would be served better by Ehud Barak.

But times have changed. Now history is dwarfing the narrow-minded nation state, and supplanting it with regional super-structures. Even some of Iran's clerics are beginning to understand this; soon enough, so will ours.

23.12.97-8.1.98

LITURGICA

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Conductor: Nicholas McGegan
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World Emunah 6th International Convention
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December 28-31, 1997 - Concorde Hotel, Jerusalem
Convention Highlights

Sunday, December 28
7 p.m. Reception with Jerusalem Mayor Ehud Olmert
Hosted by Mrs. Yehudit Huestner, President, Emunah-Israel (by invitation only)

Monday, December 29
8:15 a.m. Tour of Emunah Institutions
6:00 p.m. "A Festival Day Comes Alive" - saluting 50 years of Israel's independence, presentation to Dr. Zerah Warshaw

Tuesday, December 30
9 a.m. Plenary session I: The Jewish People - One People?
Rabbi Dr. Reuven P. Bulka, Prof. Daniel Sperber, Dr. Naom Cohen, Yair Shaleg
2:30 p.m. Emunah in Israel and Abroad
Dr. Carol Golding, Chairman, World Emunah
Mrs. Rachel Sylvester, Chairman, Emunah-Israel
Israel's 50th Anniversary Celebration
Presentation of World Emunah's Humanitarian Award to Mrs. Reuma Weizman

Wednesday, December 31
8:45 a.m. Plenary Session II: The Jewish Women Today
Rabbanit Yehudit Shilat, Rabbanit Chana Herlen Mrs. Liora Mirkin, Dr. Shoshana Kurtz
6 p.m. Gala Closing Dinner
Guest of Honor: Rabbi Yitzhak Levy, Minister of Transportation
Convention guest speakers: Naomi Blumenthal, M.K. Dr. Yoel Gouli
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Mr. Hoshea Friedman Ben Shalom
in recognition of his contribution towards Encouraging Cooperation, Tolerance and Social Action in Israeli Society

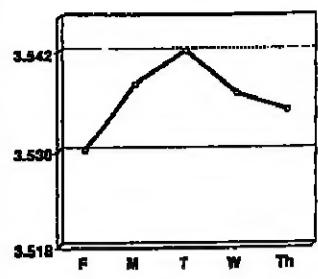
The prize of NIS 50,000 will be awarded at the Graduation Ceremony of The Seminary of Judaic Studies Monday, December 22, at 8 p.m. Gerard Behar Auditorium, Jerusalem

The Liebhaver Foundation
The Seminary of Judaic Studies
The Jewish Theological Seminary of America
The World Council of Conservative Synagogues

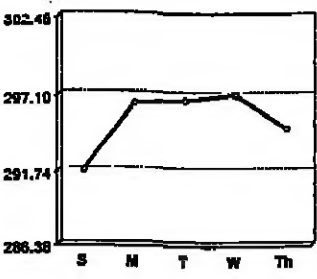
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in brief

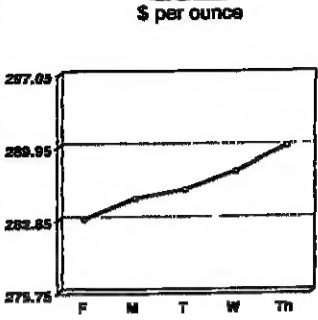
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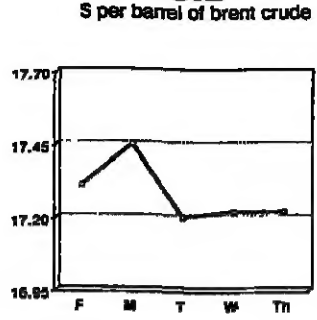
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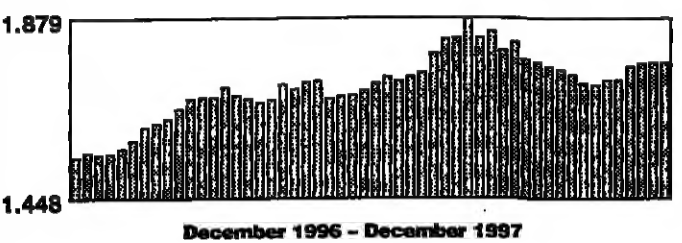
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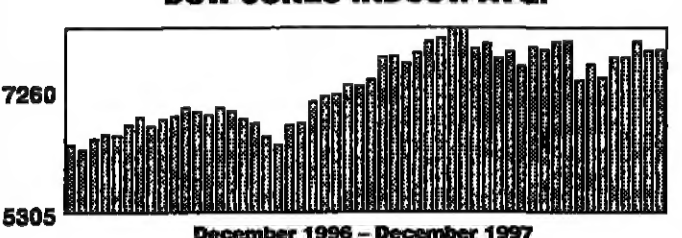
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Kardan sells holdings in South African lottery

Kardan Investments said yesterday that it sold 33 percent of its holding in the South African lottery company Moribo Leisure for \$1.9 million. Moribo is controlled by Kardan, an investment company of the African National Congress, banks and local investment companies. In a statement, Kardan said that the sale was part of a strategic plan to extend the holdings of the black leadership in economic organizations in South Africa. *Dan Gerstenfeld*

Jubilee cash vote postponed to Sunday

The Knesset Finance Committee will vote on Sunday on whether to transfer NIS 55 million to the fund for Israel's 50th anniversary celebrations. The issue was discussed yesterday, but both the Labor and Shas representatives requested internal party discussions before voting on the issue. Anniversary organizer Yitzhak Moda'i said he understands the MKs' concerns. *David Harris*

Goldman Sachs to buy 9.5% of IDB

By DAN GERSTENFELD

Discount Investments said yesterday that it will sell 9.5 percent of its parent company, IDB Holding Corporation, to the American investment bank Goldman Sachs Group for NIS 280 million. In a statement to the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange, the company said that the shares were valued at NIS 79, which is 3% below their closing price on Wednesday. "I am happy that we found a buyer of such high standing," Discount managing director Dov Tadmor said. He added that the shares represent about

75% of Discount's stake in IDB.

"We are still holding a 3% stake in IDB, which we intend to sell in the future," he said.

Discount received the holdings in its parent company in August as part of deal in which it sold its 26.7% holding in tool manufacturer Iscar to the Wertheimer family, in exchange for \$130m. in cash and the IDB stake.

The deal with Goldman Sachs, Wall Street's biggest and most profitable partnership, is still conditioned on various checks by the buyer, the signing of a detailed binding, and approval of the authorities.

Traders said that this is the first time the American investment house is buying stocks in an Israeli company. In the past, Goldman was a partner in a group which competed in the previous tender for Bank Hapoalim, along with Ted Arison and Claridge Israel, but it ultimately withdrew. Tadmor said that the company is looking for further investments as it has almost \$200m. in cash.

"We are constantly looking for investments, but right now there is nothing specific," Tadmor said. The company has stated that it intends to focus mainly on communications, infra-

structure, and financial services.

Most of the cash that Discount holds came from the sale of its stake in Iscar. The company raised another NIS 195m. earlier this month from the sale of its shares in Clal Israel to IDB Development Corporation. Analysts said that the holding company will have difficulties finding investments as profitable as Iscar.

IDB Holdings is one of the country's largest holding companies, with investments in electronics, communications, insurance, real estate and construction, banking and brokerage services, and a variety of industrial business.



Import agreement

Finance Minister Yaakov Neeman and Palestinian Authority Economics and Commerce Minister Mahar Masri exchange copies of an agreement signed yesterday in Jerusalem. The agreement allows the PA to increase imports of goods from countries that don't have diplomatic relations with Israel. It raises the ceilings on such goods that were set down in the 1994 Paris Agreement. *David Harris*

MKs to push for investment aid rise

By JENNIFER FRIEDLIN

Supporters of the proposed plan to cut capital-investment aid grants from 24 percent to 20% face a fierce battle, Eli Kazhdan, a senior adviser to Minister of Industry and Trade Natan Sharansky said yesterday. "There's been a lot of talk in the [Knesset] Finance Committee about raising the grants to 28%," Kazhdan said. "Some have even suggested raising the grants to 40%."

Both the Treasury and the

Ministry of Industry and Trade support reducing the level to 20%. Former finance minister Abraham Shohat, current Labor faction leader in the Finance Committee, is leading the move to increase the grants to 28%.

Last year, the government reduced capital-investment aid in high-priority zones from 38% to 34% percent, before lowering the ceiling to 24%.

The current crisis in Ofakim has renewed calls for greater incentives to encourage companies to invest in development towns. MK

Pini Badash (Tsomet), who has drafted a recovery plan for Ofakim, said he will lobby to have the size of the grants increased. Industrialists say that increased grants may not result in more investments.

"I don't think that increased grants will make a big difference," said David Rubner, CEO of ECI Telecom. "The grants were 38% in the past and that didn't necessarily bring what it needed to bring."

The Treasury recently asked Rubner to hire 150 of Ofakim's unemployed for his company's

plant in the town. Rubner said he would do so if the government would offer more comprehensive foreign trade risk insurance and guarantee that the Office of the Chief Scientist would receive enough money to maintain its level of research and development.

Chief Scientist Omer Berry has said she would need an additional \$57m. dollars this year to offset the drop in the amount of money her office received.

In 1997 the R&D budget totalled NIS 1.125b., down from NIS 1.13b. in 1996, Berry said.

Eastman Kodak raises job cut to 19,900

Eastman Kodak Co. said it will cut more jobs than announced last month by slashing 20 percent of its staff and taking a \$1.5 billion charge in a bid to boost profit and its share of the photography market. Kodak will eliminate 16,600 jobs, up from the 10,000 announced on November 11. The world's biggest photogra-

phy company also said it has yet to complete 3,300 job cuts planned from restructurings announced last year and early this year, bringing to 19,900 the total number of jobs to be eliminated. The Rochester, New York-based company now employs 100,500. The fourth-quarter charge of \$1.5b., up from the \$1 billion unveiled last month, will pay for

severance costs and asset write-downs in a move designed to save Kodak \$1 billion a year.

Chief Executive George Fisher will need the money. Kodak's digital imaging business will lose \$400 million in 1997, while archival Fuji Photo Film Co. chips away at Kodak's dominance of the US color negative film market with discount prices.

"Kodak is eventually getting rid of everything that is not critical to their well-being," said Ulysses Yannis, an analyst at Mercer. Boker, Buckman & Reid. "They are getting squeezed."

The job cuts underscore Fisher's failure to develop high-tech products to increase revenue and push 113-year-old Kodak into the digital age, analysts said.

Aside from the losses in digital imaging, Kodak has also said it expects to lose money again in 1998 on another new effort, the Advanced Photo System. The system allows the amateur photographer to select from a variety of formats before taking a picture.

The deep job cuts aren't a reaction to the loss handed to Kodak by the World Trade Organization, Yannis said. The WTO ruled two weeks ago that the Japanese government hadn't prevented Kodak from competing fairly against Fuji in Japan. *(Bloomberg)*

Dankner: Caltex not interested in Dor

By DAVID HARRIS

Texas-based oil company Caltex is, for the time being, no longer interested in purchasing a stake in Dor Energy, according to Shmuel Dankner, who chairs Dor's parent company, the Dankner Group.

In an unreported article published in yesterday's *Ma'ariv*, it was claimed Caltex is pulling out of negotiations to purchase a 50 percent stake in Dor because of the political instability in the region.

"To the best of my knowledge, Caltex did not withdraw for political reasons, it just decided it wasn't interested for the time being," said Dankner. "The report is totally exaggerated."

Dankner maintains Caltex only expressed initial interest in purchasing part of Dor, but the talks never went further than that. Caltex executives met Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Finance Minister Yaakov Neeman in Jerusalem on September 14, when they said they were prepared to invest \$50 million in Israel.

Dor and Caltex, a joint venture of Chevron and Texaco, were looking to expand their cooperation in the energy field, Dankner

said in September.

The companies already work together in the jet fuel area and are examining ways to cooperate in third countries. There were suggestions at the time that the two companies would jointly bid to purchase Oil Refineries, once the government decides to sell the state asset. This, however, was strongly refuted by Dor.

Since its establishment in 1988, Dor has won an 18% share of the overall fuel market, but lags behind its competitors in the gas station sector.

Caltex has operations in more than 60 countries, primarily in Africa, Australasia, and the Middle East. Formed in the 1930s, the company markets products through over 8,500 retail outlets, fuels aircraft at 38 airports, and provides marine fuels and lubricants to more than 100 ports in 22 countries. The company has stakes in 13 fuel refineries, two lubricant refineries, 17 lubricant blending plants, six asphalt plants, six grease plants, and more than 520 ocean terminals and depots. Caltex is expanding its retail service network in China and is increasing investments throughout Asia. The company's annual sales total over \$16b.

Absorption Ministry wants customs grant freeze

By DAVID HARRIS

The Absorption Ministry will next week ask the Knesset Finance Committee not to update the customs grant paid to immigrants from Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, and Latin America, according to ministry economist Danny Topaz.

The ministry is concerned the one-off payment, which covers the cost of household electric items, is increasing at a faster rate than the cost of the appliances. The grant was introduced in December 1990 to help immigrants who cannot afford to

import such goods or come from countries where they are not available. The grant is available in addition to the immigration basket of services available to those arriving from other countries.

Initially, the grant was worth NIS 5,000 to families and NIS 3,000 to individuals. Since then the amount available has increased on an annual basis to NIS 10,000 and NIS 6,000 respectively. The ministry is concerned that since its introduction, the grant has increased some 30 percent in relation to prices of electrical goods, said Topaz.

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Not so great expectations

For all the talk about pressure on Israel, the US administration will probably limit its demands of Prime Minister Netanyahu. Washington is expecting assurances more than hard numbers – at this point, Hillel Kitter reports from Washington

Last month's cabinet decision accepting the principle of redeployment in the territories did more than send a message about the Israeli government's intentions. It delivered Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu from the American dog house.

US policymakers and analysts consider the Israeli decision crucial in convincing the administration that he was serious about advancing the process, officials say. As a result, heading into yesterday's sessions with Netanyahu in Paris and Palestinian Authority chairman Yasser Arafat in London, Albright had lowered her expectations. Instead of obtaining a firm number from Netanyahu on the percentage of land from which he intends to redeploy, she is seeking assurances that he will give her enough to present to Arafat to get the ball rolling. By Netanyahu's estimate the Israeli plan will be ready by mid-January.

"We're not going to impose an artificial deadline if we see a serious effort is being made. We do conclude that what is going on now is serious and genuine"

— US official

tion that Netanyahu serious about achieving a breakthrough with the Palestinians. Its coincidence, they say, that he past two weeks, the US has been backing off from expectation that Netanyahu face a detailed accounting of his West Bank territory he is willing to turn over to the Palestinians in the interim stage, and ending him some breathing room, as President Clinton said Tuesday, to "freshen out" the cabinet's commitment to redeploy.

The US has also backed off from Secretary of State Madeleine Albright's statement that a disappointing 11 months ago, she hoped for big things in December – meaning "Or else". Albright's first two of her recent meetings with Netanyahu in Europe did much to convince

that he was serious about advancing the process, officials say. As a result, heading into yesterday's sessions with Netanyahu in Paris and Palestinian Authority chairman Yasser Arafat in London, Albright had lowered her expectations. Instead of obtaining a firm number from Netanyahu on the percentage of land from which he intends to redeploy, she is seeking assurances that he will give her enough to present to Arafat to get the ball rolling. By Netanyahu's estimate the Israeli plan will be ready by mid-January.

In a telephone conference call Monday with the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, Netanyahu said the government's internal deliberations over its final-status security needs would take two more weeks, and discussions over the extent of the second redeployment another week or two. "The process of deliberation we are going through now in the government and in the Knesset, and soon with the opposition, and in a larger sense with the Israeli public, is meant to secure the broadest possible support for an agreement," Netanyahu told the group.

Because of the PA insistence that according to the Hebron Agreement the bill for the second redeployment came due in September, the administration temporarily shifted its focus from an Israeli time-out in settlement construction, to the land transfer question.

There are varying interpretations regarding the extent to which the US resorted to pressure tactics. The tone and content of what was said – and by whom – suggest that Israel was constantly on the receiving end of administration irritation, although it wasn't the only one. Albright has made known her displeasure with both the Israelis and Palestinians loud and clear since her National Press Club speech in August. Then there was Clinton's refusal to meet in Washington with Netanyahu last month – and his hours-long appearance at a peace awards ceremony and luncheon with former prime minister Shimon Peres. At that event, he scolded both Israel

and the PA for preferring brinkmanship over cooperation. "All right, signals were broadcast, and we resented it," said Ambassador to the US Eliahu Ben-Eliass, but he insisted that he never feared the situation "would get out of control" or that relations with Washington would be damaged.

Asked whether the administration had exerted pressure on Jerusalem to quantify its redeployment intentions in order to move the peace process along, a senior US official downplayed the "P" word, but did not entirely dismiss it. "Pressure seems to be in the eyes of the beholder," he said. "We have an interest in the peace process, but it shouldn't be more than the parties themselves. We've talked to each side, letting them know our views, what it would take to move ahead. We have an interest. It's not going to be there forever," he warned.

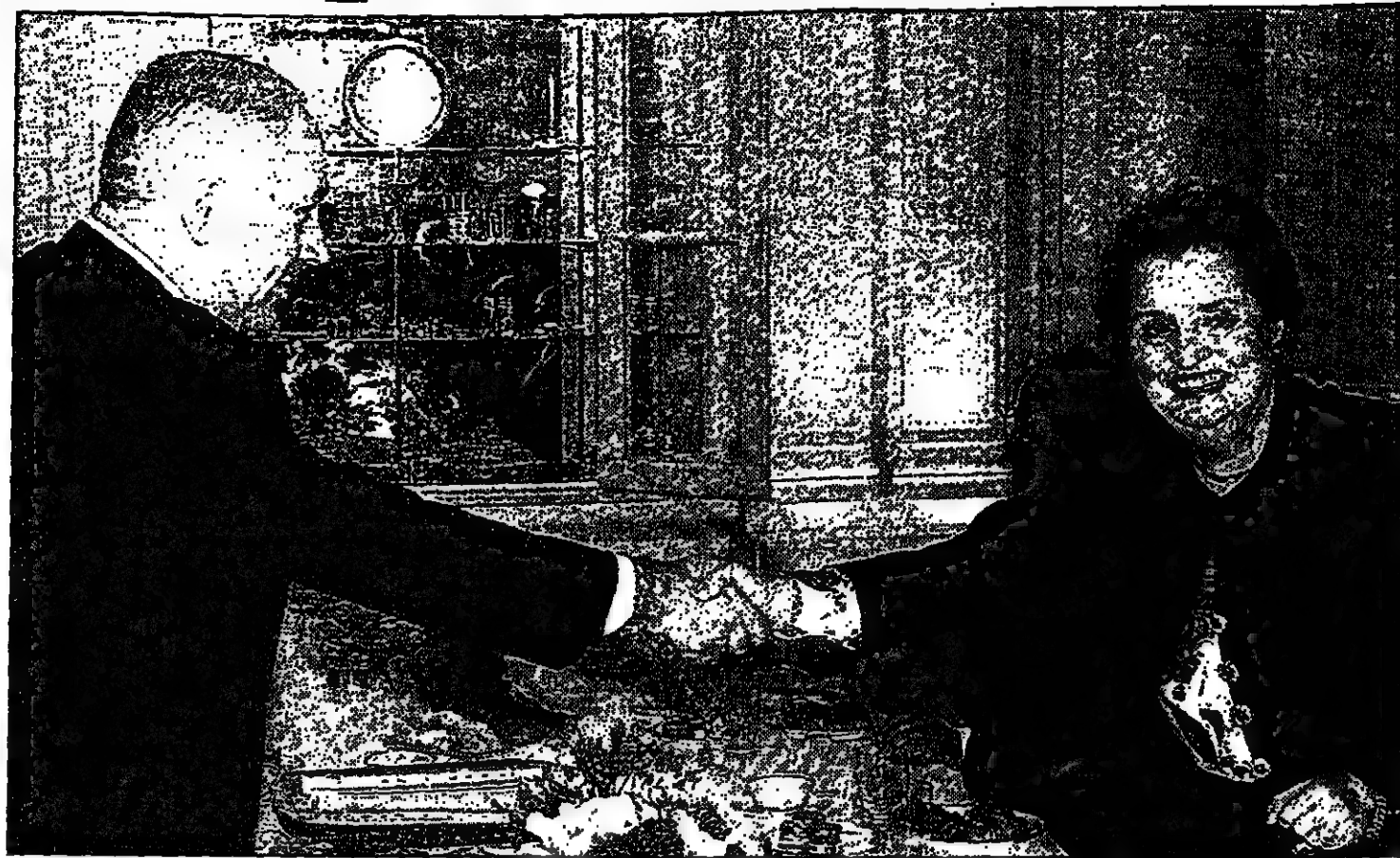
The US official added that "as long as we think a serious effort is being made on what are admittedly difficult issues, we're willing to work intensively to move ahead on the issues. At this juncture, we're trying to work through this."

The executive director of the Washington Institute for Near East Policy, Robert Satloff referred to the administration's actions as "elements of pressure" rather than pressure, because the latter "is what we do to Iran or Iraq. But there's more than a whiff" of pressure, Satloff said.

If not pressure, then impatience? The US official acknowledged that "for a period of time," Albright was "impatient" with both parties. "She saw a deterioration of the process. What she's found is that, in fact, there is an effort to find a way out," he said.

The official asserted that the US is not driven by a hard-and-fast deadline by which it wants to wrap up an Israeli-Palestinian deal on Albright's four-part agenda for spurring the talks: Israeli decisions on IDF redeployment and "time-out"; enhanced security cooperation; and acceleration of final-status negotiations.

At the same time, he pointed out that while the Americans want to



Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu with US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright at the start of their meeting in Paris yesterday.

provide the parties time and room to make what Albright has termed the "hard decisions," they don't want to encourage further procrastination. "We're not going to impose an artificial deadline if we see a serious effort is being made. We do conclude that what is going on now is serious and genuine, which means you don't set artificial deadlines. But it's not open-ended. They should be done with some sense of urgency," he cautioned.

Another US official conceded frustration, but contested the assumption that it has been directed solely at Israel. "There's a tendency to write that that frustration is directed against the prime minister. That is wrong," he said. "We are also frustrated that in the first half of the year, the Palestinians [took] their security responsibilities too lightly" and that last week they sought to upgrade their status at the UN.

There's also frustration," he continued, "with some of the Arab states for not going to Doha [for the regional economic conference held in Qatar last month]. For the Arabs, it is not enough to be sunshine supporters of peace when

things are going well. What we're looking for is leadership."

The Washington Institute's Satloff said that beyond the cabinet's decision itself, two factors account for the administration's

least temporarily, the Jewish community, long divided over the course of the peace process. The AIPAC official added that the community was also enraged by the insinuation by Albright and

While the Americans want to provide the with parties time and room to make what Albright has termed the 'hard decisions,' they don't want to encourage further procrastination

shift. One is "the impression that this sense of pressure worked" because Netanyahu had said he wouldn't carry out redeployments prior to final-status negotiations and "now you have a debate within the Israeli government." The other, he said, was the backlash in the American Jewish community.

According to an official of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC) Clinton's snubbing of Netanyahu united, at

others that Israel was responsible for the fraying of the commitment of the US's Arab partners to the anti-Iraq coalition because of its lack of progress in the peace process. As the lobbying group watched Israel being painted into a corner, its message to administration officials was: "Cool it."

AIPAC executive director Howard Kohr said the group has conveyed to the administration "that working with the Israeli gov-

ernment produces results." He added that the perception of a rift between Washington and Jerusalem "creates heightened expectations on the part of Israel's negotiating partners. They believe that not only can they demand more, but there's less they have to do, which is counter-productive to the peace process," said Kohr.

The last straw was *The New York Times*' story 11 days ago maintaining that Albright intended to call Netanyahu's bluff on whether the cabinet was indeed prepared to proceed with the next scheduled redeployment. Within days, the Conference of Presidents wrote to Clinton expressing concern over the public airing of differences. Simultaneously, the US's special Middle East coordinator Dennis Ross and Assistant Secretary of State for Near East Affairs Martin Indyk, assured the Conference that they were not the sources for the *Times* story. They also contested the article's thesis. The AIPAC official said the organization believes Ross and Indyk on both counts.

See EXPECTATIONS, Page 18

Preparing to bail out

The National Religious Party is ready to bring the government down if it proceeds with the redeployment. But that, say party leaders, is a big 'if', as Sarah Honig reports



NRP leaders united against any redeployment (from left to right): Education Minister Zevulun Hammer, MK Hanan Porat and Transportation Minister Yitzhak Levy

reports which claim that as many as a third of all settlements in Judea and Samaria may be left in areas out of Israel's control. Such veteran settlements as Kiryat Arba, Beit El and Ofra have been reported to be out of Mordechai's map of security interests.

"This is not the information that I have and I believe this isn't the information on which the prime minister is operating. The aim now is not to leave a single Jewish settlement at the PA's mercy."

"The misunderstanding may stem from the fact that Mordechai presented two maps – his 'security interests' map and his 'national interests' map. [National Infrastructure Minister Ariel] Sharon fused the different interests into his single counter-map. Mordechai's two maps give birth to all sorts of erroneous speculation."

But what if the NRP is wrong? "From our point of view there aren't many possibilities," Levy says. "We sat in the opposition during the Labor government's term because we couldn't accept the Oslo process. If it was a non-starter for us at that time, why should it be

any different for us now? "The fact that the Netanyahu government might opt for a slower, more careful, but just as full an implementation of it, doesn't make it any better than Oslo was under Labor and Meretz. If the difference is nothing but pace, then for us it smells just as odiously."

"The only reason we joined this government is because of its guidelines and additional decisions," Levy stresses. "But if the government betrays its own guidelines then we do not belong in it."

THAT IS what nearly all nine members of the NRP's Knesset faction say, with the occasional exception of Yigal Bibi and lately also of Shmuryahu Ben-Tzur, chairman of the NRP central committee.

"Remember how Geula Cohen and Rabbi Moshe Levinger rallied against [then prime minister] Yitzhak Shamir?" Ben-Tzur asks. "Their all-or-nothing line inflicted Oslo upon us all. Great care should be taken here, because the alternative to Netanyahu would be disastrous. Barak will surely not admit the NRP into his government. He abhors us and our influence will wither."

"Perhaps if we hadn't been such maximalists and joined Labor's coalition, we could have toned down the damage that Oslo wrought. I caution my colleagues not to dismiss Netanyahu's pace. Barak will not take such painstaking care. He will hand everything to Arafat. Netanyahu at least tries hard to minimize Oslo's ills."

If the NRP fancies bringing the government down, then Ben-Tzur suggests "it ought to first prepare alternatives and open a dialogue with Labor, since it would almost certainly take over. It would be nice to know, before we dump Netanyahu, whether Barak agrees with us on security lines, on what the Arabs call the right of return

for refugees, on the Jordan Valley, on dismantling settlements. These aren't minor issues. We should think before we kick."

Ben-Tzur admits he is in the minority in his party's Knesset faction.

"Truthfully, I don't know if any other NRP MK thinks like me. I, for one, would only cede small bits of territory in return for concrete quid pro quo from Arafat. There are 35 murderers we want extradited. He'd get a certain amount of land for whatever number of killers he turns in."

"There would be rewards for reciprocity, for apprehending Hamas extremists, for reducing the size of the so-called PA police which has swelled beyond any thing the Oslo Accords allow. I would want Arafat to return arms he holds in violation of the accords."

But though Ben-Tzur admits to be a near-lone voice in the faction, he claims to "know the central committee and I know I am not alone there. But I also hear the very different voices from the settlements and rabbinical circles. They are clamoring to quit the coalition. I am appalled at the element of adventurism here – 'Let's blow things up first and consider the consequences later.' Even if it's merely a tactical stance, I fear it will get out of control and the government will really fall."

LEVY REJECTS the notion that "bringing Netanyahu down will necessarily put Barak in the driver's seat. If Netanyahu's moves result in our walking out of his government, then it stands to reason that we will not support him for re-election."

"But perhaps the Right will field another candidate. I think we can appeal even to the Left with the idea that peace must not be at any price but must be a credible peace. The Right can win," he insists.

Levy likewise takes issue with Ben-Tzur's fear that the government will fall because the NRP will be unable to curb what it puts into motion.

"We aren't propelled by hysteria. We joined a government which undertook to develop and strengthen settlements. If instead they are abandoned, there will be no difference for us if Labor or the

Likud does the abandoning.

"Due to the great ferment in the NRP, I will summon the party central committee as soon as the cabinet comes up with an actual program."

He believes this won't happen for about a month-and-a-half, "and even this timetable is flexible. As I see things now it's exactly even odds that in the end we will either stay or leave the government. It's 50-50."

Levy gets more pessimistic though, when he considers that "a few days ago I thought there were greater odds for our continuing in the government. There is an undeniable trend in an unfortunate direction. We can't ignore the fact that we hear Netanyahu less and less addressing himself to the question of reciprocity and talking too much of redeployment, maps, and satisfying Albright's expectations. We feel an accumulation of trepidations and the heavy burden of tensions, of not knowing where it's all leading and what we will do."

MK Hanan Porat has fewer doubts. "If Netanyahu decides to withdraw without any tangible PA reciprocity, then we will react in stages. As soon as a detailed withdrawal plan passes in the cabinet, the NRP will declare itself free of coalition discipline. It will vote as it sees fit in the Knesset, even in confidence motions. We will, however, do nothing foolhardy. We will wait."

Porat continues: "A decision may be made, but we will only bring the government down when implementation begins. Until the government's decision is put into effect, we may be an unpredictable element in the coalition, but not a rash one. After all, a decision, reprehensible as we may find it, only matters if it is executed. As long as it is only on paper, we can afford to wait because there is no telling what could happen. Maybe it will never be carried out."

A top NRP official, commenting on Porat's remarks, notes that "This is not formal party policy, but it's the nearest thing to it. This is our unwritten resolution. There is almost wall-to-wall agreement that this is how we will act," the official stressed.

Or maybe, as the official quipped, "the square will die, or the dog will die..."

Many in the NRP Religious Party are days' bring up the Yiddish folk tale of the old man who persuaded the hostile are of a local manor to spare his life he would teach his dog to sing one year.

"How could you promise it?" quaked the other Jews in his. "Now he'll kill you for sure." But the old Jew shrugged indifferently. "Who who knows? It will happen in a year?" he explained. "The square may die, the dog may die..."

In the same vein, any time the NRP are convinced that such time will pass before Israel and any more territory for the Palestinian Authority. Until the first troops are actually redeployed, they say, a local happen-

For that reason, there is US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright not to hold breath. The near consensus in the party is

"After all, a decision, reprehensible as it may find it, only matters if it is executed. Maybe it will never be carried out"

— HANAN PORAT

that no concrete redeployment plan will be adopted before the more immediate critical task of the survival of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government – the budget vote.

The balancing of Israel's Ks may not rob the Americans much sleep, but it ought to be into their calculations, members of the NRP assert. Netanyahu's summit this hurdle before he takes his next risky leap. Final decisions, clearly, need maps and the accompanying -

Who's hit hardest by the 1998 budget?

As the Knesset gears up to hammer out the final draft of the 1998 budget, welfare-oriented organizations, think tanks, interest groups and individual activists are making a last-ditch effort to persuade the politicians to change key elements of the Treasury's proposal.

On Tuesday, hundreds of social workers gathered outside the Finance Ministry to demand an additional NIS 2 billion for the health funds and the public welfare services. Former MK and Black Panther leader Charlie Biton announced the formation of a new organization of old-time Panthers, intellectuals and artists and vowed to "bring down the current establishment within a year."

Earlier in the week, the Adva Center, an independent research and advocacy organization, published a 44-page analysis of the social aspects of the budget. The Histadrut, the National Insurance Institute and Genesis, a community-based social rights advocacy group, have all recently issued position papers criticizing various social aspects of the budget.

Next week, the Knesset Labor and Social Affairs Committee, Adva and the Association of Social Workers will host a meeting of dozens of social action groups at the Knesset to discuss the budget.

More ominously for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and Finance Minister Yaakov Neeman, MK Maxim Levy, the chairman of the Labor and Social Affairs Committee, warned that his Geshet faction would neither support the budget nor remain in the government if it passed intact.

"We have informed the prime minister that we will not vote for the budget, no matter what," he said earlier this week. "The budget

Adva, the government expenditure on social services in the 1998 budget amounts to about NIS 80 billion, or just over 40% of the total budget.

Unequal health coverage

There seems to be a broad consensus among social advocacy groups that by far the most troubling issue in this year's budget is the proposed changes in the National Health Insurance Law (see story, page 15).

"I don't sleep at night," said MK Naomi Chazan (Meretz) after studying the amendments to the law included in the Encouragement of Growth and Employment in the Economy bill, this year's euphemism for the traditional Arrangements Law which provides the legal infrastructure for the budget.

Lea Ahud, director of the Histadrut's Institute for Economic and Social Research, warned that the system which Neeman wants to introduce is "regressive rather than progressive. Instead of each person paying according to his or her means for the same health services, the poorer sections of the population, which tend to use these services more, will end up paying a disproportionate amount." Adva, Genesis and the Association of Social Workers all singled out the National Health Insurance bill as the most serious of one of the two most serious problems in this year's budget.

"The entire notion of Israel as a welfare state is being systematically undermined by this kind of legislation," said Chazan. "Until now, even under the most difficult circumstances, we have always been able to guarantee

Wherever you look – in health care, education, child and old-age allowances, or public housing – there's less. The brunt of the cuts will affect the elderly and the poor, writes Dan Izenberg



Social workers protest outside the Finance Ministry on Tuesday to demand that more funds be allocated to health and welfare services. (Geshet)

dren earning 130-170% of the average wage will lose one-third of the grant for the first and second child (NIS 50 per month per child), while families earning above 170% will lose two-thirds of the grant (NIS 100) for the first and second child. Because child allowance payments for these families will be based on a means test, and salaries may change from time to time, the amendment calls for the employer to pay the grant to the employee and to be reimbursed by the NII. The means test is to be based on the salary of the husband alone, rather than both parents, even if the wife is earning more.

"We already tried this system between 1986 and 1993 and it didn't work then either," said Ahud. "The government hopes to collect NIS 500 million. This is taxation, any way you look at it, despite the government's declaration not to add to the tax burden. If they are going to tax, let them at least do it progressively and efficiently." Adva estimated that the change will affect close to 400,000 families and that the loss of income will already be felt by families in the 50th to 60th percentile of earners in the country – in other words, the lower middle-class.

NII payments to the elderly reduced

The government also wants to cut in half the special NII grant given to recipients of old-age allowances based on the number of years they have worked over

and above the first 10. For every year of work from the 11th to the 35th year, the elderly are entitled to a bonus of 2% of the value of the old-age allowance. Those who have worked the maximum 35 years are entitled to a bonus of 50%. Today, the basic old-age grant is NIS 867 and the bonus as much as NIS 434. Given the fact that most elderly people receive a small pension or no pension at all, the bonus is a crucial component of their income and cutting it in half will be painful, according to the NII.

"In Israel, where there is no compulsory pension insurance, half the elderly have no pension at all and most of the rest are entitled to a very small one," said the NII in a critique of the budget. "Under these circumstances, the reduction of the bonus will hurt the elderly poor."

Public housing deteriorating

Barbara Epstein, the executive director of the Jerusalem branch of Genesis, pointed out that all of the budgetary provisions for people who do not own their own homes will go down this coming year. For example, the Housing Ministry last year allocated NIS 1.155 billion to subsidize the rent for special populations. This year, that budget will be down by 9%.

Ministry funding to purchase houses for special sectors of the population has also been cut this year. For example, the budget for special housing for immigrants has been reduced from NIS 66 million to NIS 56m, even though some have been waiting for housing since 1991. Money to repair the existing stock of public housing has also been cut from NIS

76m. last year to NIS 66m. this year. In Jerusalem, 427 families are on the waiting list for public housing but the public housing corporations, which own empty flats, lack the money to make them inhabitable, said Epstein.

Less teaching hours, more gray education

One of the top items on Adva's list is the education budget. For the second year in a row, the education budget has been cut in real terms – from NIS 16.362 billion in 1997 to NIS 16.337b. in 1998. The decrease is even more substantial, since the number of students in the education system has increased by 2%. According to Shlomo Swirski, the author of the Adva budget analysis, the cuts include a decrease in the number of classroom hours (for the second year in a row), which will lead to a resurgence of "gray" (after-school) education for which parents will have to pay out of their own pockets. Gray education, which flourished during the 1980s, when the education budget plummeted because of inflation, increases the gap between rich and poor since the poor cannot afford to pay for private lessons, said Swirski.

If that weren't bad enough, the 1998 budget also continues a trend of cutting on the number of special teaching hours for children from deprived backgrounds. Special teaching hours will constitute 11% of the entire basket of teaching hours in the country's junior high schools this year, compared with 12.4% last year, and 16% in 1995, said Swirski. While the number of available hours is decreasing, the number of potential consumers has increased since 1994, when schools in the Arab sector were added to the program.

Unemployment leading to poverty

According to Eli Ben-Gera, the chairman of the Association of Social Workers, all of the welfare ministries will finish fiscal 1997 in deficit. Yet, despite the fact that unemployment has soared to over 150,000 and is still on the rise, according to government officials, the Treasury is not increasing the welfare budget this year to cope with the problem.

"Unemployment is one of the prime causes of poverty," said Ben-Gera. "If the budget is deliberately designed to counteract high unemployment, a humanist, democratic society based on some sort of social justice would at least provide help to deal with the victims – just like the army provides

advanced medical facilities to deal with the casualties of anticipated war." Ben-Gera estimated that addition of 1% of the budget – \$2 billion – half for the health aid and half for welfare services would solve the problem.

free market philosophy

MK Shlomo Ben-Ami said that the points raised in various critiques of the budget are important if they do not reach the heart of the matter. "We have to understand that for all that the government has a socio-economic philosophy. There are some things it has imposed – like changes in the IT payments – which it can't retract. But that won't affect the philosophy." According to Ben-Ami, the budget does not provide solutions to the two factors which truly shake society – alleviating poverty and providing equal educational opportunities.

The government has received NIS 5 billion from the sale of Bank Leumi, said Ben-Ami. "Is it willing to use that money for education instead of for servicing? That would be a stunning act with deep implications. But no one talks about such a thing." Ben-Ami said the government must also invest in infrastructure to make the development town in the periphery attractive to investors.

Maxim Levy agrees with Ben-Ami. "The old has become competitive and there is no reason why we should participate," said Levy. "But government should have provided the development towns first providing them with advanced technology instead of leaving it with the factories of the 1950s." Levy called for the government to provide financial incentives to bring high-tech investors to the development towns and protect the residents of those towns from the proper education to handle new technology.

But he is years of government rescuing and non-intervention according to Mazal Gold, head of Wizo's Jewish chapter. Instead of taking a proactive role in the industrial sector, the government is trying to divert itself of many of the social services it provided in the past.

"The government is conducting a 'enterprise policy,'" said Gold. "It is getting out of its involvement in welfare and services part of the policy of privation. That's what Margaret Thatcher tried to do in England and had terrible consequences. Instead of learning from her experience, the government is trying to do the opposite."

"The government should have prepared the development towns first by providing them with advanced technology instead of leaving them with the factories of the 1950s"

—MK Maxim Levy

offers no solutions to the unemployment problem, does not offer help to large families or housing solutions for young couples and creates separate health systems for the rich and poor.

"The government can reduce the scope of poverty through the National Insurance Institute or make people poor. Netanyahu received 85 percent of the vote from the residents of the development towns," said Levy. Today, he is disappointing them and they are very angry. Unemployment is reaching enormous proportions. We will not sit quietly by and if we don't succeed, we will not be a partner to it."

The welfare activities of the government are conducted by the ministries of health, education, labor and social affairs, immigrant absorption and housing, as well as the National Insurance Institute which is responsible for the payment of grants to different sectors of the population. According to

universal services." Many critics pointed out that after the years of study and public debate leading up to the passage of the National Health Insurance Law in 1994, the legislation is now being swept away by an amendment buried in a complex administrative law dealing with many unrelated issues. The bill will barely be debated in the Knesset Labor and Social Affairs Committee or any public forum, and the public will hardly know what has happened before it's too late.

Other major issues in the 1998 budget are the proposed reductions in child-allowance payments and old-age grants provided by the National Insurance Institute.

Child-allowance cuts affect lower middle-class

According to the budget proposal, families with up to three chil-

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הוא מנהל את

The (secret) trial of the public health system

The National Health Insurance Law will be three years old on January 1. But the Finance Ministry may mark the anniversary by trying to disband the system — without even acknowledging it, Judy Siegel-Itzkovich reports

The National Health Insurance Law, whose third anniversary will be marked on January 1, is on trial. But the hearing is being held in camera, with the prosecutor and the defense attorney shouting at each other in back rooms. The general public — more like a helpless, abused minor whose custody is being decided for him than a defendant who is asked to testify — is largely unaware of the entire process. The media sent to cover the trial have only lately awakened to the gravity of the matter and the issues that are at stake. Meanwhile, the judge — our political system — is too overburdened, ignorant or uninterested to hand down a reasoned opinion.

The real danger of [the Treasury's] proposed changes is their complete lack of transparency," declares Prof. Shmuel Pencas, the director-general of the Hadassah Medical Organization and a member of the State Judicial Commission of Inquiry on the Health System, whose recommendations led to the health insurance law. "There has been no openness in the process, no democratic debate, no professional assessment of the repercussions. Although I myself favor a number of the proposals, including permission to set up private health funds, I am distressed by the fact that the Treasury's plans are shrouded in secrecy, like a cloak-and-dagger operation," Pencas says.

Instead of considering amendments to the National Health Insurance Law by first sending them through the Knesset Labor and Social Affairs Committee (which processed the original law), the Treasury is making major changes in the system by attaching them to the Budget Arrangements Law, Pencas explains. These are being handled behind closed doors by the Finance Committee (which lacks experience in health matters) and presented in a single package — together with a hodgepodge of

Judicial Commission, headed by retired Supreme Court justice Shoshana Netanyahu, to examine the system and propose major reforms. When the government was ready to implement the recommendations many had been diluted; others, such as the establishment of public hospital corporations and the inclusion of geriatric and psychiatric care in the basket of health services provided by the insurers, were postponed indefinitely. But at least all the vested interests were heard and the arguments pro and con were publicly aired.

At the beginning of February 1995, workers were introduced to the new health tax. Their salary slips showed that 4.8% of their gross monthly income had been deducted directly by the National Insurance Institute. An additional 0.8% mandatory "organization" fee was deducted to replace Histadrut or other union dues. They were also invited by their health funds to pay extra each month for supplementary health insurance: this payment would entitle them to a second medical opinion, a specialist of their choice, urgent treatment abroad, some geriatric nursing and even complementary medicine — all under strict limits. In addition, the better-off purchased additional health coverage from private insurance companies.

The elderly and the poor, who were uninsured or underinsured in the past, have received the most benefit for their money, while the middle class, especially working women who have lost tax credits, are paying much more for the same or lower level of care.

Israeli Arabs, the elderly and bareolim, who previously were not sought out by the health funds, were now being courted, due to the incentive of the capitation system that compensated insurers for greater numbers of members. Development towns and distant settlements with large numbers of previously uninsured residents were treated to comfortable, air-

Treasury is criticizing the funds for being "wasteful" and it and the Health Ministry have finally adopted the post-office requirement, which will go into effect in January.

In an interview with *The Jerusalem Post*, Health Minister Yehoshua Matza conceded that his ministry has been in disarray. "What do you expect? There have been five health ministers in three years, and in such a situation, it has been very difficult to implement policy," he said. But I've been here for a year, and I've learned the subject, and I hope to be health minister at least to the end of the government's term in the year 2000.

Matza said he has appointed a new health-fund supervisory unit, which will halt needless development and superfluous expenses. And he said the ministry has drastically restricted the health funds' advertising expenses.

Matza declared that the Health Ministry would prevent health funds from supplying over-the-counter (non-prescription) drugs with a form filled out by their doctor explaining that trips to a clinic just to get such forms cause much needless expense to the health system. Instead, he said, non-prescription drugs will be available at private and health-fund pharmacies at reduced cost.

Matza added that he has initiated major reforms in the pharmaceutical industry, with the aim of increasing competition. "This will really bring down drug prices," he declared.

Although Matza jumped at the chance to voice his position, the Treasury was very uncooperative, as if it were loath to participate in a public debate on its proposals. After Finance Minister Yaakov Neeman agreed to a telephone interview following the Matza interview, and this reporter was told by his spokeswoman, Esti Appelbaum, to be ready for his call at odd hours in the early morning and late at night, he was not to be heard from. Her repeated



Under the National Insurance Law, the elderly were courted by private health funds. The Treasury's proposals could change that. "No health fund facing market forces wants the elderly and the chronically ill," says Kupat Holim Clalit director Dr. Yitzhak Peterburg.

The basket of health services, which all the health funds must supply to members, would become elastic, rather than rigid, and the insurers could offer services and treatments that would attract the customer base they preferred.

"No health fund facing market forces wants the elderly and the chronically ill. These are expensive patients, and the capitation allotment for the elderly is not high enough to compensate for their extra costs," argues Peterburg of Clalit.

"Maccabi and Meuhedet will again become the health funds of the healthy, wealthy and young, and Clalit and Leumi will have the old and the very sick. Insurers that want healthy members will put dietary advice, complementary medicine techniques and exercise clinics in their basket of services and the yuppies will flock to them. If the Treasury allows private health funds, the public insurers will be emptied out of their young, wealthier members and our deficits will only increase," he says.

The first public round of fire erupted when Neeman refused to finance the annual NIS 150 million cost of 14 vital drugs for cancer, AIDS, schizophrenia and diabetes patients — demanding that the health funds or the Health Ministry absorb the costs. The appearance of bald young cancer patients nudged by Reuma Weizman and pleading for their lives at Beit Hanassi induced the Treasury to retreat, but only slightly.

At a cabinet meeting, Neeman and Matza agreed that patients would receive the drugs, contriving a hazy formula of "efficiency measures" to cover the costs. Yesterday, Neeman went to the

Schneider Children's Medical Center for Israel in Petah Tikva for a "photo opportunity" with cancer patients, but hospital officials used a private encounter with him to denounce his health policy.

After several closed sessions of the Finance Committee, Matza announced that he had "won the next round," and that the basket of health services would remain fixed. Health funds must request permission for any changes. He also insisted that the family health (tipat halav) centers would continue to provide preventive care, and that government-run centers would not be handed over to the health funds.

The main fight that remains is over the levying of fees for a variety of health services that used to be free or almost free: visits to hospital emergency rooms and community health fund doctors, outpatient clinics, hospitalization, plus a doubling of charges for medications.

Peterburg and the anti-smoking interests demanded that cigarette taxes be hiked by at least NIS 1 per pack, which would bring in nearly half a billion shekels to help cover the NIS 1.3 billion deficit in the health system. A survey by the Health Ministry, which supports the idea, showed that 83% of the general public (and 60% of the smokers) favored the tax rather than charging fees for health services.

Although smokers cost the health system billions of shekels a year, and higher taxes discourage young people from lighting up, the Treasury has adamantly opposed this. "I strongly advocate raising tobacco taxes," says Hadassah's Pencas. "But it seems the Treasury wants such taxes to use at its own discretion, rather than for the health deficit, and it worries



The Treasury refused to pay for 14 vital drugs until the public pleas of cancer patients like Tal Levy, seen here appealing to President Weizman, forced a change. (Isaac Harari)

"Maccabi and Meuhedet will again become the health funds of the healthy, wealthy and young, and Clalit and Leumi will have the very old and very sick."

—Dr. Yitzhak Peterburg, Director-General of Clalit

other revisions in regulations about taxi-driver licenses, tax rules and other miscellaneous matters.

Health systems around the world have been in financial distress for years, and it will only get worse with growing life expectancies and the public's demands that their doctors relieve every ache and cure every disease. Israel's own system, powered by a surplus of physicians and a generally superior standard of expertise and research, was in dire straits when the new system was launched in 1995. Kupat Holim Clalit, the main insurer, was heavily in debt and provided care to the majority of elderly and chronically ill patients in the country unwanted by two of the other three funds, who could pick and choose their members. The Histadrut labor federation milked Clalit, which was then its health fund, raking in a set percentage of membership fees to help cover its political and organizational expenses.

More than three years before the new system went into effect, the government appointed a State

conditioned new community health clinics with marble floors and even plush chairs.

Although dead-set against the National Health Insurance system, but forced into compliance by their finance minister Avraham Shohat (Labor), Treasury officials liked the idea of this competition for new members.

Then the fighting began to get dirty, as telemarketing contractors were hired to lure people away from their health fund with prizes of luggage or blanket sets and some employees even forged signatures to get more commissions. Abuse and waste soon totaled some NIS 80 million, but the government made no protests.

"Two years ago, we asked the Treasury to allow members to transfer to another insurer by filling out forms at a post office, instead of changing their health fund on a whim. But officials refused, arguing the marketing approach was good for competition," says Dr. Yitzhak Peterburg, now Clalit's director-general and then director of Beersheva's Soroka Hospital. "Now the

promises that Treasury budgets chief David Milgrom and deputy budgets director (for health) Haim Peltz would explain the Treasury's plans at a public hearing, except for a three-minute conversation with Peltz, who recommended a few low-level aides. But neither did they answer repeated calls.

The Treasury seems, however, to be climbing down somewhat from its original version of the Arrangements Bill, which would have — in the view of public health advocates — in effect canceled the National Health Insurance Law.



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Does the IDF want haredi soldiers?

The High Court of Justice is debating it. Labor leader Ehud Barak says he'll push for it. But is the army really ready for haredi conscripts? Arie O'Sullivan reports

On Tuesday, the High Court of Justice was presented with a petition that would limit the number of deferments granted to yeshiva students. The petitioners, Meretz MKs Amnon Rubinstein and Haim Oron, want to force the defense minister to set such a ceiling.

Earlier this month, Labor leader Ehud Barak said that if elected he would draft haredim.

But is the IDF truly prepared to absorb large numbers of haredim? Does the IDF even want them?

The army and Defense Minister Yitzhak Mordechai have refused to publicly answer this question. Both said they didn't want to comment until the High Court of Justice rules on the matter.

In their replies to the petition their positions began to emerge. What's becoming increasingly clear is that there is no single view on the subject.

Mordechai declared that even though the number of draft deferments has risen to an unprecedented 7.4 percent of the annual draft pool, it did not present "any significant harm" to Israel's security needs and the matter should be dropped. Rubinstein was disappointed with his response, saying, "Quite frankly, we think that this position is tainted by political considerations. Mordechai should be more courageous."

But the IDF's position states that reforms must be made to the system to increase supervision over those who claim to be studying in yeshivot.

Officially, the sentiment in the IDF is that there is a place for yeshiva students in the army. The army is apparently willing to give them conditions to make their service comfortable, such as glatt kosher food and time for Torah studies. And while the army would prefer to have the religious soldiers serve in various units as it sees fit, it would consider setting up special units, without female soldiers.

Brig-Gen. (res.) Yehuda Duvdevani, head of the Defense Ministry's Youth, Nahal and National Missions Branch, has held discussions on the possibility of setting up haredi yeshivot similar to the national-religious hesder institutions, in which religious soldiers do their army service over a period of five years, combining 18 to 24 months of military service with 36 months of Torah study.

In private conversations, however, many IDF commanders from all ranks make it clear that, because the haredim lack vocational skills and a basic general education, they cannot meet the needs of the modern military machine, and their social conditioning would prevent them from ever truly integrating into the army's largely secular environment.

The court itself has already acknowledged the difficulties. In a 1986 High Court ruling, Justice Aharon Barak wrote: "No one can really say whether the draft of many yeshiva students, who see conscription as a blow to their fundamental faith that Torah studies override their military obligation, will add to the fighting force of the IDF."

"The fact is that the lifestyle of many of the yeshiva students is extremely religious and therefore causes them many problems assimilating with cultures and societies foreign to them.... They are also split among themselves and recognize various kashrut supervisions and rabbis and their daily behavior is likely to present many difficulties in their deployment in the IDF and confound its framework," Barak added.

THE ARMY has over 2,000 specific tasks a soldier can learn. The challenge is matching soldiers to the tasks. There are shortages of drivers and mechanics, for example, while for other tasks there is a surplus.

"I don't need battalions of

clerks," one senior officer said.

Last year, the IDF reassessed its deployment of its 5,000 surplus soldiers. Some were offered to the police, others were farmed out to the security services, Defense Ministry and Education Ministry.

But senior IDF officers say the state has never addressed the matter seriously, leaving the army to figure out how to deal with soldiers it doesn't want. As a result, nearly a quarter of soldiers are released before completing their full tour of duty.

So despite the public debate, the army hasn't fought hard for drafting the haredim, because it doesn't believe they could really contribute to sustaining a high-quality fighting force.

Not all senior officers agree with this stance. "The IDF certainly needs to tell society what its needs are and the

emphasis today needs to be put on sciences and technology and vocational training," says Maj-Gen. (res.) Ran Goren, who was OC Manpower Branch from 1989 to 1992. "The paradox here is that you need to overdraft to find those who are suitable."

"That doesn't mean the IDF won't find a place for the haredim to serve. If they are drafted early, at 18, then most of the yeshiva students could certainly perform a useful service," says Goren. In fact, Goren believes that at least 20 percent of the haredim would be found fit for combat duty.

"You have to remember that some of these Shas types suddenly found religion shortly before being drafted. There is nothing saying that they won't make good combat soldiers. They are not people who grew up in anti-Zionist yeshivot like the Neturei Karta. If they get in in the beginning then they will be good."

"It could be that they'll be put into an arrangement like hesder. I don't see any possibility of setting up something which is more reli-

gious than that, since hesder is already too much," Goren says.

IN 1968 the army handed out 800 deferments to full-time yeshiva students. In 1996 the number reached 28,547, nearly 2,000 more than the previous year, according to the IDF. That represents the cumulative number of deferments issued, and not just the new ones.

In 1995 the new deferments represented 5.5% of the draft pool. In 1996 it came to 6.4% and this year it has reached 7.4%. Amnon Rubinstein estimates that by the end of the decade, the number of religious deferments will reach 10% of the draft pool.

"If nothing is done about this then we will see the demoralization of the people who do serve. It will make it more difficult to release men from reserve duty and ultimately shorten compulsory military service," Rubinstein says.

ABOUT 30 percent who defer service today are religious-Zionist youths who do so for an extra year of studies before joining the army

for the full three years of duty. But the growing majority are haredi students who annually defer their service until they are either released from duty at age 41 or, because of their age and family status, perform only a few months of service, which nonetheless grants them veteran's status and benefits.

Since 1977, when haredi parties began joining government coalitions, this arrangement has been written into coalition guidelines and has withstood numerous High Court and legislative challenges. Between 1987 and 1993 there were 13 bills aimed at limiting or changing the arrangement. None of them passed.

To be eligible for a deferment, one must be enrolled in a recognized yeshiva full time and not work. According to a secret report on draft deferments written by Haim Yisraeli, a deputy director general of the Defense Ministry, a copy of which was obtained by The Jerusalem Post, 40% of yeshiva students violated their conditions. But of those who were caught and eventually called up, 92% were released without their ever putting on a uniform, because they were deemed unsuitable.

The Yisraeli Report recommends those seeking deferments be required to sign a declaration that they will only study and not work. It also calls for yeshivot to

be held strictly accountable for their students, and sanctions to be taken against yeshivot that cover up for their students.

Both Shas and United Torah Judaism say they support stringent measures against those who violate the deferment agreement, but both have also dismissed the IDF figures as an exaggeration.

"We don't want all of the haredim to be drafted. But there are many who are suitable and who are able to be trained for a useful service," Rubinstein says.

Still, were it not bound to the creed of "the nation's army," many commanders would prefer not to bother. This incites Labor MK Ophir Pines, who says the "we are all in it together" spirit still reigns in democratic Israel. "In a democracy, it is society which tells the army who it must draft and not the other way around," Pines said.

His recent attempt to pass a private member's bill limiting draft deferments to 2,000 annually failed. He fears that if not halted, the increasing number of deferments would widen the secular-religious rift.

"Those who serve don't want to feel like suckers. Sure, they want to join the army for the experience and the 'macholim,' Pines says. "But in the end, when they see every 10th young man not joining, they will start to revolt."



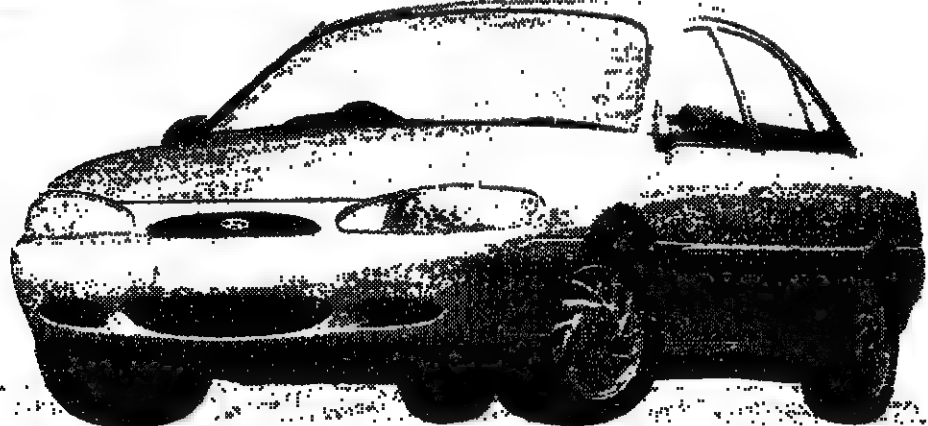
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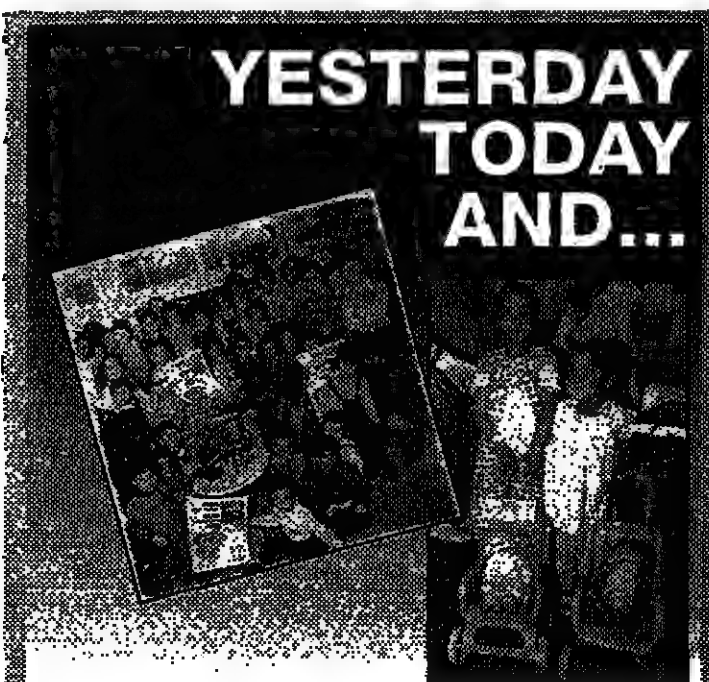
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Hanukka seen in different lights

In the first of a series of articles marking Israel's 50th anniversary, Herb Keinon looks at what has happened to Hannuka. The holiday that used to be the equivalent of Independence Day in the pre-state era is fast becoming just a big doughnut feast

Hanukka, the Zionist movement discovered, could be so much more than a children's holiday commemorating a miracle and a cruse of oil. It could be a vessel filled to the rim with symbols and messages used to rally the nation around the Cause.

And it was.

Hanukka, perhaps more than any other holiday, has — over the centuries — gone through a dramatic transformation. It has gone from a story celebrating the miracle of the oil that lasted eight days instead of just one — the Talmudic version, to the celebration of heroism and military victory — the Zionist movement's interpretation.

"Hanukka," said Bar-Ilan University political science professor Eliezer Don-Yehiya, was historically not central in Jewish tradition. "But with Zionism, it became perhaps the most important holiday. There has been a complete change in emphasis. In the Talmud, the emphasis was on the miracle of the oil and on lighting the candles and less of an emphasis on the military victory. The Zionist movement emphasized the heroic aspect of the holiday, the victory, the strength."

Now, 50 years after the establishment of the state, the holiday is undergoing yet another transformation. This one, according to Jewish philosopher Eliezer Schweid, is much more troubling. "People are now paying more attention to the *suganiyot* [doughnuts] than to ideas," he said. "This is a natural process; it has to do with ideology becoming less a part of the holiday. The tradition today is to eat as much as you can, and people do that with much enjoyment."

BY CONTRAST, in the pre- and early days of the state, Hanukka was imbued with abundant content. Hanukka, in the pre-state days, was the equivalent of Independence Day. It was a day commemorating glory, heroism, military valor. It was marked by rallies, public events, and ideological discussions.

"The Zionist movement," Schweid wrote in his book *Sefer Mahzor Hazmanim* ("The Cycle of Appointed Times: The meaning of Jewish holidays") "sought support in tradition to anchor the major transformation it tried to bring about in the life of the people of Israel. Hanukka was well suited for this purpose. Until the establishment of the state and Independence Day, Hanukka was the most prominent and important holiday of the Zionist movement."

50

"This was a natural development. There is a visible association between the acts of the Hasmoneans and the Zionist enterprise. The nationalist aspirations are the same: sovereignty in the Land. The fact that Hanukka was not full of [religious] prohibitions on work, and not packed full of symbols but was open to popular creativity, made it possible for new interpretation. Secular Zionists could celebrate it without directly conflicting with tradition and its guardians."

A good example of the importance of the holiday appears in an article written in the 1950s book *Sefer Hano'adim* ("The Book of Festivals"). In it, Ben-Zion Dinur, the country's education minister from 1951 to 1955, wrote that Hanukka "is a holiday that is close to us in spirit — a festival of the victory of activism — nationalist, political, socialistic — of freedom and the struggle for it, the sense of sacrifice and the power of aspiration. The days of Hanukka have once again become days of salvation and victory." Contrast that interpretation to the description of Hanukka in the Talmud, and it becomes clear just how greatly the holiday's emphasis, for so many people, has changed.

"What is Hanukka?" the Talmud asks in *Tractate Shabbat*. "When the Greeks entered the Sanctuary, they defiled all the oils, and when the Hasmonean house prevailed and vanquished them, they searched and found only one remaining jar of oil with the high priest's seal. Although it contained only enough oil to burn one day, a miracle occurred and the oil burned eight days."

Dinur left God out of his Hanukka story; the rabbis of the Talmud largely left the heroics of the Maccabees out of theirs. According to Ruhama Weiss-Goldman, director of Hiddush, a company that creates educational projects and curricula in Jewish education, this Zionist message came across in pre-state days and

soon after in the way the holiday was celebrated in schools and at public parties.

"For a time, Hanukka was celebrated with the symbols of Independence Day," she said. "It was celebrated with flags, and with the Jewish National Fund box as a central fixture at parties."

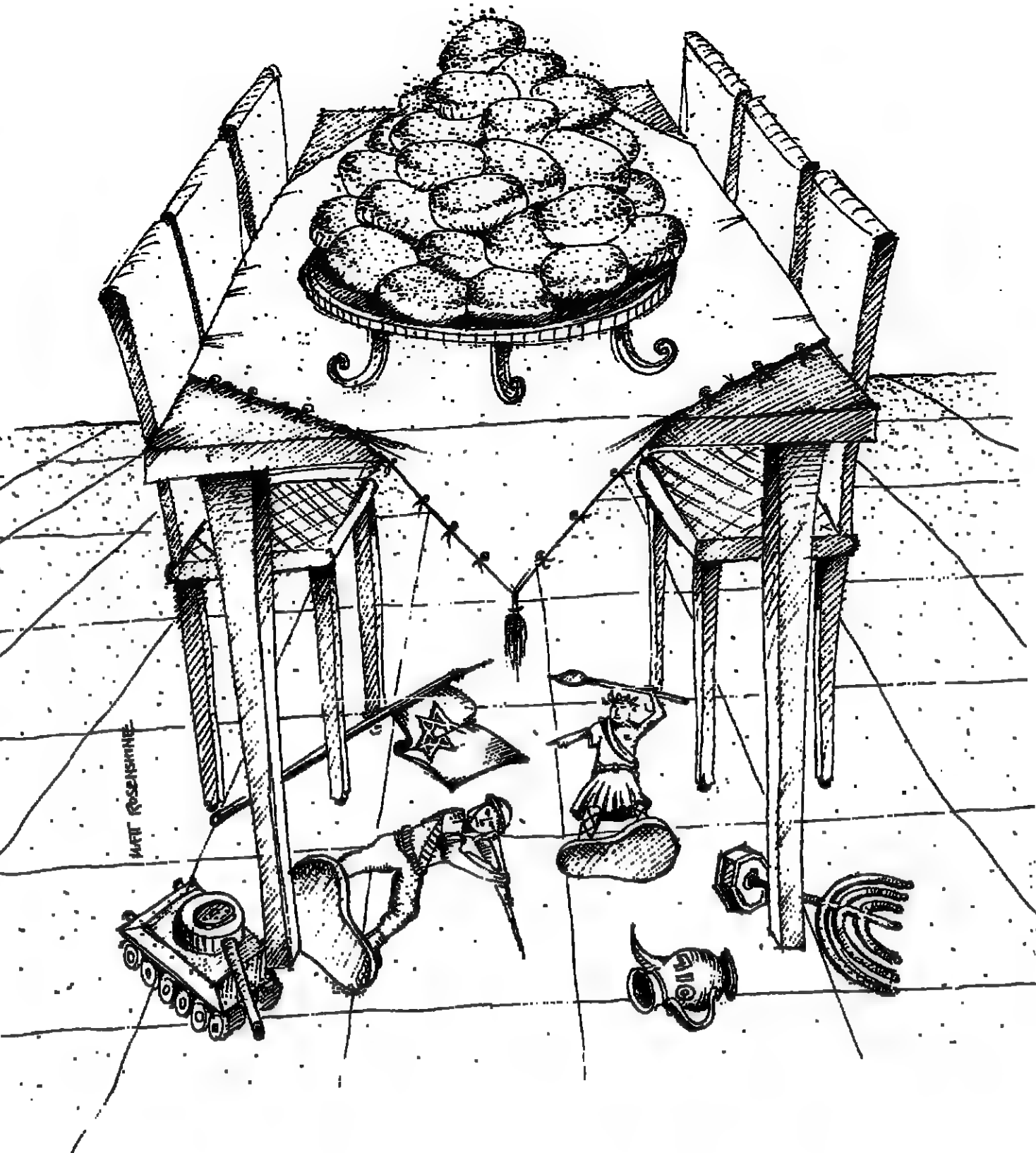
Weiss-Goldman has put together a source book of texts for Hanukka. "In some texts the Arabs are the ones who appear as the Greeks, and the Hasmonean-Greek conflict looks like the Israeli-Arab one," she said. "In other texts the conflict is between the Zionists and anti-Zionists. In these cases, the Hellenistic are those who did not make aliyah. The question is who is your enemy. Everyone had their own interpretations of who were the Hasmoneans, who were the Greeks, and who were the Hellenists."

The haredim, said Don-Yehiya, obviously looked very negatively on this new interpretation. "They say it is ironic that those putting Hanukka in a central role in Jewish life were people they viewed as the spiritual heirs of the Hellenists," he said.

The problem with the nationalist rather than the spiritual spin the Zionists placed on the holiday, according to Don-Yehiya, is that it is not in line with historical facts. The Hasmoneans would have tolerated the Greeks had they not promulgated religious decrees. The secular Zionist movement, he argued, overlooked this and reinterpreted the holiday so that the "causes of the revolt were not stressed, and the spotlight was directed at the heroism and courage of the fighters and at the continued struggle for political independence even after the religious decrees were abolished." The Zionist movement, Don-Yehiya said, not only reinterpreted the holiday to fit its message but also changed the way it was celebrated.

"If prior to Zionism the holiday was celebrated inside the home, with dreidels and potato pancakes, the Zionists took it into the public arena. They initiated torch runs, marches, rallies, marathons to Modi'in, visits to the graves of the Maccabees." All this, however, was toned down with the birth of the state. Soon many of the motifs placed on Hanukka were simply transferred to Independence Day, and later to Jerusalem Day as well.

Another reason for the decline in the importance of Hanukka, wrote Don-Yehiya in a paper dealing with the role of Hanukka in Zionist ideology, was "related to the attitude of David Ben-Gurion,



who wished to glorify the biblical period and its heroes, not the Hasmoneans or other heroes of the post-biblical period. Although Judah the Maccabee and Bar-Kochba were undoubtedly brave heroes, they were eventually defeated and were unable to preserve and consolidate the political independence for which they fought." Ben-Gurion wanted as heroes an enduring political and military establishment. Don-Yehiya argued, not the fleeting achievement of the Hasmoneans.

"Today," Don-Yehiya said, "I think we are going back, to a certain extent, to the traditional [spiritual] message of the holiday — more of an inclination to observe it as it was always observed, privately at home, lighting candles, eating latkes. This is part of a change in Israeli society. The values that were so important at the beginning of Zionism and the state — values of strength and heroism, and the struggle for national independence — are losing importance."

Fifty years later, Don-Yehiya said, Israel is not "a heroic society like it was. With the state an established fact, there is a weariness with all the big ideologies and the symbols and ceremonies tied into them. People are less willing to be

dictated to from above about how they should celebrate."

While Don-Yehiya said this could be interpreted as "more normal," Schweid counters that the decline of the significance of Hanukka is a sign of the country's capitalism and rampant consumerism, not necessarily normalcy. "Does it mean we are more normal? No," Schweid said. "It shows we have turned into capitalists. I don't know what normal is; this is normal capitalism. Once we were poorer, more attuned to the importance of public and communal values." Schweid said that for much of the country, the holiday

does carry a Zionist message. But that the importance of ideas has just diminished all around.

"When people become richer, they like to eat more than they like to deal with lofty ideas and values," he said. "The basic value today is for people to enjoy the fact that they have money and buy all kinds of things. This takes precedence over everything. Notice that all our holidays are consumer festivals. We even buy more *suganiyot* than we eat — but we buy; it gives us a good feeling. This is a sociological process. The holidays, all the holidays, have lost their content."

Note to our readers: Amotz Asa-El's column now appears on Page 9. Moshe Kohn's 'A View from Nov' and Shlomo Riskin's 'Shabbat Shalom' both appear in the Magazine. Dry Bones is now on Page 18.

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GRAPEVINE

By GREER FAY CASHMAN

Jerusalemites can testify that although you can take the mayor out of City Hall, you can't take Jerusalem out of the mayor. Although he is no longer in office, Teddy Kollek, who served as mayor for over a quarter of a century, continues to promote Jerusalem's interests. He did so most recently at the opening of a Ludwig Blum memorial exhibition sponsored by the Jerusalem Friends of the Hebrew University. After reminiscing about Blum and the generation of the Palmah, Kollek—who opened the exhibition—stressed the need for the university to maintain its contacts with its Jerusalem-based alumni and thereby strengthen both the university and the city. Among those who applauded not only what he said but the fact that he spoke for much longer than his usual two minutes were Lily Silver, Batya Borowski, Barbara Mandel, Ra'anana Meridor and Judge Zvi Tal.

AS AN introduction to its new monthly lecture series in English, Beth Hatefutsoth, the Museum of the Jewish Diaspora, held a cocktail reception for members of the diplomatic corps who, after touring some of the exhibition galleries, sat down to listen to MK Amnon Rubinstein discussing the problems of pluralism in Israel. Despite competing functions hosted by the ambassadors of Japan and Kenya, there were several ambassadors in attendance such as Fermin Zalada of Spain, Euripides Evriades of Cyprus, Frank Land of South Africa, Theodor Waltau of Germany, and Wolfgang Paul of Austria. But

ambassadors were outnumbered by consuls, honorary consuls, and cultural and press attaches, who included Martin Koneal, Third Secretary of the Embassy of the Slovak Republic; Natalie Amar, Canadian Cultural Attache;



Local actress-of-the-year Esti Zakheim with Tel Aviv Mayor Ronni Milo. (Yossi Zwecker)

Arturs Puga, Latvian Consul; and Daniel Lew, Honorary Consul for Papua New Guinea. Beth Hatefutsoth, according to its director David Alexander, is preparing for a gala 20th anniversary celebration which will coincide with the 50th anniversary of the state.

WHEN Israeli embassy staffers in Lithuania heard that Prina Herzog was coming to Kaunas

(Kovno) for a two-day meeting of the standing committee of the World Health Organization, they immediately took advantage of one of her other hats and called together representatives of leading women's organizations so that Herzog could address them in her capacity as head of the International Council of Women. When she suggested that they form an umbrella organization which could join ICW, she met with a negative response. They had for too long been under the umbrella of the Soviet Union, she was told. They really didn't want any more umbrellas.

WHAT do folk singer Betty Klein and MK Shlomo Ben-Ami have in common? A love of Judeo-Español culture. Both were in Brussels earlier this month for the four-day Sephardi Festival, which was opened by Ben-Ami and closed by Klein, with a program of Judeo-Español romanzas, wedding songs and liturgical melodies which were familiar to most of the audience, who joined in enthusiastically. Also participating in the festival was Israel Radio's Matilda Koen Sarano, who has authored books and plays in Judeo-Español and who, on this occasion, told classic Sephardi stories. Her colleague Moshe Shaul, a veteran of Israel Radio's Ladino department and editor of the Judeo-Español magazine *Yerushalayim Aful*, was one of several speakers who addressed themselves to the renaissance of

Sephardi literature.

"DOUZE points," said Israel Television broadcaster Daniel Pe'er in his role of MC at the opening of the Seventh International Conference of the



Soccer star Nir Klinger and his wife Michal are overjoyed at the birth of their daughter.

Jewish Media. It was a nostalgic reaction to Gali Atari's rendition of "Hallelujah," the song which won her the Eurovision Song Contest in 1979. Pe'er, who had been a co-compere of the event, recalled that the contest had been held in Jerusalem just five days after the signing of Israel's first peace treaty with an Arab state.

Dry Bones



ACCIDENTS

Continued from Page 1

Israeli drivers, it turns out, are not so ornery and *davka*-minded as popularly believed. When the Seat Belt Law went into effect in the mid-1970s, it was widely predicted that drivers here would pay no attention.

Instead, Israeli drivers and passengers now have one of the highest front seat belt compliance rates in the world, said Prof. Eilahu D. Richter, head of the Unit for Occupational and Environmental Medicine at Hebrew University-Hadassah Hospital's School of Medicine, a leading critic of traffic safety policy.

Local motorists are commonly thought of as suicide jockeys, but in fact are among the world's most obedient and law-abiding when it comes to wearing helmets, Richter noted.

"If you put an Israeli driver in a better road environment for a while, let him drive on a roomy, eight-lane interstate from Nevada to New Mexico, he'll be no less polite than anyone else," said Munkhwa. "But here in Israel, which has among the most crowded roads in the world, drivers turn into jungle cats fighting for survival. There's nothing unusual about it. Take a driver from Nevada and put him in New York, and he'll also turn into a jungle cat."

Truck drivers are considered a particularly menacing bunch who enjoy throwing their weight around on the highways. But Richter insists that the trucking companies are mainly to blame for forcing the drivers to work ridiculously long hours, as is the Transport Ministry, which doesn't crack down on the companies.

In recent interviews with 160 truck drivers, Richter and his student, Dr. Shelly Sabbag, found that nearly half the drivers said their employers demand that they drive more than 12 hours a day. As a result, over 30% said they had fallen asleep at the wheel at least once.

Blaming Israeli mentality for road crashes amounts to a "Jewish guilt trip," Richter contends.

Another popular myth is that traffic deaths are on the rise in year after year. In fact, the death toll for 1996—513—was about 200 fewer than the average annual figure in the mid-1970s, when there were about one-tenth as many vehicles on the roads as today. The figure fell to below 400 in 1985, then began climbing again.

"The number of road deaths has been going up in recent years because the number of vehicles and kilometers driven has been increasing tremendously—by 5%—

10% a year. But the true indicator—the rate of deaths per number of vehicles or per kilometers driven—has been going down," said Link.

The Israeli mentality, such as it is, may explain why so many people here are convinced that this country has the worst traffic death rate in the world.

In a study published last year based on road death statistics from 52 countries—mainly developed ones—Link found that Israel had the 16th "best," or lowest, death rate per kilometers driven. Sweden was lowest, England second-lowest. In deaths per vehicle, Israel ranked 23rd. In deaths per traffic injuries, Israel ranked fourth lowest.

Still another misconception is that the way to make Israelis better drivers is to put the fear of God into them—fine them NIS 1,000 or NIS 2,000 for every ticket, take their licenses away, put them in jail.

"Harsh punishment doesn't solve anything," said Munkhwa. "What's important is not the severity of the punishment, but that the driver be certain of being punished if he breaks the law."

In other words, what's needed is good enforcement, something which Israel lacks because it does not have enough traffic police, and is only now, on a limited basis, beginning to use cameras to catch violators.

One of the oldest traffic myths of the century, and one that is still believed by more than a few Israeli men, is that of the incompetent "woman driver." The truth is that killing people on the road is essentially a "guy thing."

"Women drivers take many fewer risks, they're much less likely to drive recklessly, and they're much more hesitant about driving in dangerous conditions. You're not going to see many women driving on the Arava Road at 2 a.m.," noted Munkhwa.

Yaffa Blichovsky, a social worker and probation officer in Jaffa who counsels drivers convicted of negligent homicide, said that of the roughly 200 killer drivers who came to her office over the last eight years, about 90% were men.

But maybe the most dangerous myth of all is that road accidents and deaths are just something we have to live with, an unavoidable price of modern life. The Australian state of Victoria cut its annual traffic death toll in half—from about 800 to 400—in one year.

Sweden has adopted a program called "Vision Zero," with a goal of cutting traffic fatalities to zero. "Don't call traffic deaths 'accidents,'" Richter emphasized. "They are not accidents."

The first of a four-part series. On Sunday: What Israel can learn from other countries

"tongue troopers," wanted Berson to change the sign or face heavy fines.

After the story was played up by Quebec's English media, Berson got a call from the commission saying the matter had been dropped. No reason was given.

The minister in charge of enforcing the French regulations conceded the law had been too narrowly interpreted.

Berson's business, founded by his grandfather 75 years ago, is a landmark on Montreal's St. Laurent Boulevard, which has long symbolized the dividing line between the city's Anglos and Francophones.

"They backed off," Berson, 66, told *The Jerusalem Post*. "I'm happy they realized that five Hebrew letters aren't so offensive."

But the episode has left a bitter taste in his mouth. "The more I think about it, the more ridiculous it is. I've lived here all my life."

3 RULES

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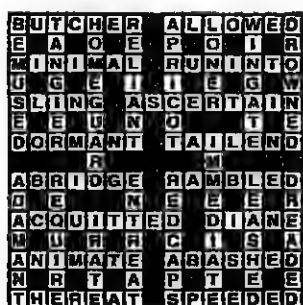
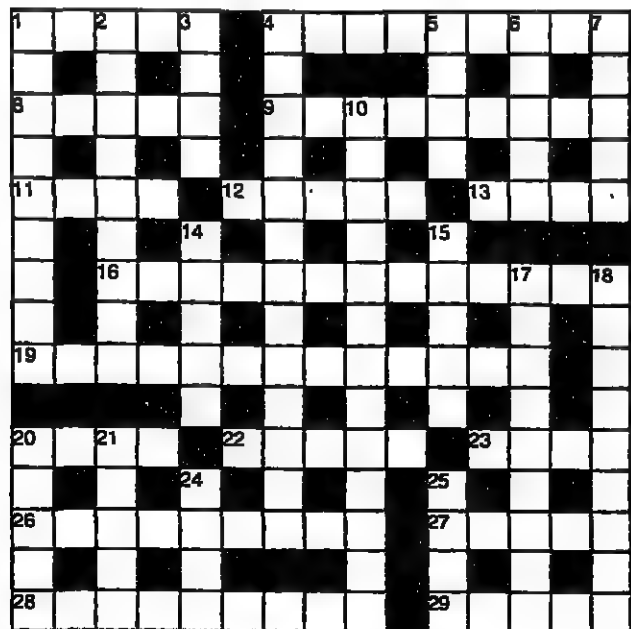
ACROSS

- 1 Spy a refined sort of chap? (5)
- 4 Four-letter word that upsets Margaret T (9)
- 8 Cockney's comic artist is at Covent Garden (5)
- 9 Ropy way of letting oneself down (9)
- 11 Has a little Greek (4)
- 12 Up and about in a shake (5)
- 13 Air of boy starting geometry (4)
- 16 Non-racial game, perhaps, of transatlantic relations? (5-8)
- 19 What doctors say can not be passed on, touchingly (13)
- 20 River trial (4)
- 22 Precocious little girl who could go either way? (5)

- 23 House found in home counties, by motorway (4)
- 26 As score came up, it went the wrong way (8)
- 27 Stays, the highest on board? (5)
- 28 Fan of former farm-vehicle (9)
- 29 Grounds, for example, held by doctors (5)

DOWN

- 1 Get into a boil about ban (9)
- 2 Watches locomotive that has trouble with lamps (9)
- 3 Knock back some of the gin (4)
- 4 New tan carpets for restaurant, by the way (9,4)



Yesterday's Quick Solution
ACROSS: 1 Coarse, 4 Heirs, 5 Aorta, 9 Dossier, 10 Audible, 11 Omen, 12 Saw, 14 Peer, 15 Idol, 18 Dam, 21 Ich, 23 Eulasse, 25 Gambler, 26 Reign, 27 Tutor, 28 Switch.
DOWN: 1 Cravat, 2 Abridge, 3 Scabbard, 4 Host, 5 Illum, 6 Serene, 7 Idler, 13 Withdraw, 16 Oculist, 17 Budget, 19 Merry, 20 Steuch, 22 Comet, 24 Slur.

QUICK CROSSWORD

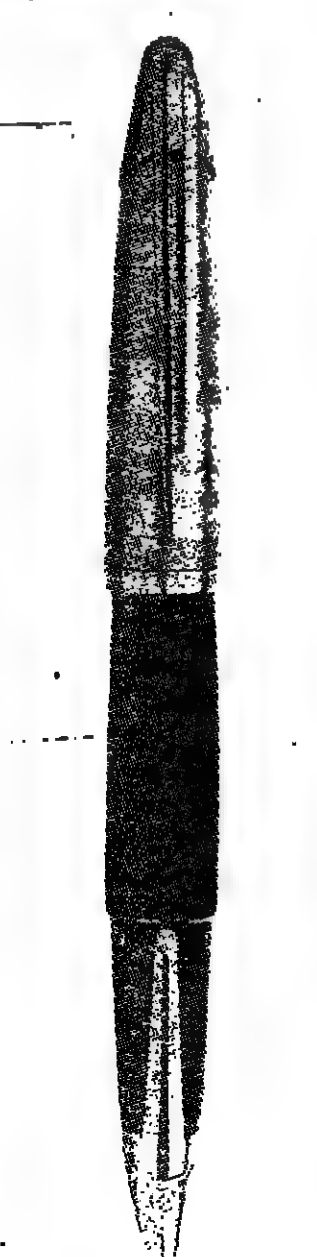
ACROSS

- 1 Umbrage (5)
- 4 Popular soup (6)
- 9 Limb of seal (7)
- 10 Wanderer (5)
- 11 NT book (4)
- 12 Agitated, moved (7)
- 13 Residue (3)
- 14 Fraternity (4)
- 16 Skin, coat (4)
- 18 Shelter (3)
- 20 Greed (7)
- 21 Counterfoil (4)
- 24 Puccini opera (5)
- 25 Blackout (7)
- 26 Hazard (6)
- 27 Sailing-vessel (5)

DOWN

- 1 Nonsense (6)
- 2 Lively (5)
- 3 Large exhibition (4)
- 5 Scolding woman (8)
- 6 Naval officer (7)
- 7 Affectedly genteel (2-2-2)
- 8 Impudent, rude (5)
- 13 Give up throne (8)
- 15 Love affair (7)
- 17 Went without food (6)
- 18 Even, flat (5)
- 19 Not present (6)
- 22 Theme, subject (5)
- 23 Recreation (4)

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A 'thank-you' to those friends at Hanukka

What a delight it was to meet our readers at last Friday's book fair at ZOA House in Tel Aviv.

It was even more delightful to accept from them over NIS 2,000 in donations for our Hanukka Toy Appeal.

Now I only have to raise another NIS 48,000 to pay the wholesalers' bills for the toys I have already sent to municipalities, institutions, foster homes and deprived families all over the country.

With only five days left before the first candle will be lit, I was getting a bit nervous that our readers had forgotten us, but as you can see by the listing below, things are not so bad. You have remembered.

The problem was the recent strike which left your donations piled up in mailbags all over the country. At last, the mail is beginning to be delivered, for which I thank one and all.

However, there is a simple solution. Plastic. You can phone me and give me your Visa credit card details and light the first candle knowing that you contributed to those less fortunate and made a lot of kids happy. Please call (02) 537 6528.

Different people raise money for the funds in different ways and now for the third year, our friends of the Ramatayim Men's Choir have organized an evening of Jewish music featuring guest soloist Zalman Deutsch, Pirchei Efrat, The Young Ankor Choir and the Ta-Koli Choir, which will take place at the Israel Museum, at 8 p.m. on December 31.

All proceeds to benefit our good causes.

Remember the slogan of our funds: No one ever got poor from giving charity. Only richer in spirit. Mail your checks to: The Jerusalem Post Funds, P.O. Box 31, Jerusalem 91000.

Donors in the United States wishing to receive tax benefits can send their donations to: Friends of The Jerusalem Post Funds, 211 E. 43rd Street, New York, NY 10017. Please designate in your letter to which fund you wish to donate.

FORSAKE ME NOT

NIS 330 Aviva Katz, Tel Aviv. NIS 210 in honor of Reba and David's marriage - Jane.

NIS 200 in loving memory of my husband - Reuven Surans, Yael Elbaum. NIS 180 Mait Ptasnik, Tel Aviv. In honor of the 80th birthday of David Yardeni of Ashdod - Shmuel Berger, Kiryat Ono.

NIS 134 in loving memory of Moshe Zavadzki and his daughter Estelle Binebaum on their yahrzeit. NIS 120 in loving memory of our daughter, Devora Rachel Bar-Giora - Molly and Irving Kreiser, Netanya.

NIS 100 Betty Regensburg-Sarfaty, Netanya. In memory of my dear parents, Ephraim and Rael - Joe Charloff.

NIS 54 in loving memory of Amold Levy - Larry Levy, Efrat. In loving memory of Miriam Goldstein - Ethel Schin, Kiryat Ono.

NIS 50 Muriel Harris, Kiryat Ono. In memory of my beloved husband, Ernst - Aliza Sender, Rishon LeZion. Carol Chasid, J'm. In memory of our dear husband and father, Haim - Genia, Mickey and Danny Gutman, Haifa. Anon. J'm.

NIS 36 Harvey and Phyllis Narrol, Beersheba. In loving memory of our dear husband and father, Azriel - Tilly and Gidon Fleishman, Netanya.

\$1,000 in memory of Marie and Simon Jaglom. \$200 A Hanukka gift from Judy and David Miller, Oxford, OH.

\$100 Wayne Sharp, Brookville, OH. Anon. Beersheba.

\$50 in memory of my wife, Hanne Ruth, and brother, Morris Louis - Paul Ellenbogen.

\$50 in memory of our beloved parents, Leo and Mait - Nezi and Helga Allweis, W. Hartford, CT. Anita Stern-Gilbert, Dorset, VT. Frances Lieber, Haifa.

\$36 Morris and Sarah Geneslaw, Brooklyn, NY. In honor of the birth of Alexander Moses Calmas - Chestnut Hill, MA. Martin Dash, Walnut Creek, CA.

\$35 Gimmel class of Temple Hillel Bnei Torah, Simon Fischer, Anna Harmon, Jeffrey Cohen, Kassa Belay, Danielle Chelnirsky, Zachary Ekin, Sara Schneidman, Janis and Benjamin Monat, W. Roxbury, MA.

\$25 Ala Carte Vender Services, Huntsville, AL. Leopold and Hanna Wiesner, Netanya.

\$20 Mr. and Mrs. Spilberg, Skokie, IL. \$18 Harvey Winston, New York, NY. Marilyn Isler, New York, NY. Mr. and Mrs. Shepherd Kohn, W. Hollywood, CA. In honor of our grandchildren, Susan and Aaron Yaffe, Samuel and Randy Duttin - Millard and Edith Duttin, Vidor, City, NJ.

\$10 Janet Fishkin, Philadelphia, PA. \$500 "In Honor of our children, Dr. Baruch and Sena Schwartz of Efrat, Stanley and Chana Polish of Temec, NJ, and Asher and Heather Tannenbaum of Montreal - Doris and Moshe Tannenbaum, Montreal.

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NIS 200 Liora Richi, J'm. NIS 180 On the yahrzeit of Charles (Yehzekel) Jacobs of blessed memory - Dr. John Jacobs, J'm., and Leah Weisberg, London.

NIS 126 in honor of my beloved Sivan's seventh birthday - Carole Schwartz, Tel Aviv.

NIS 100 Betty Regensburg-Sarfaty, Netanya. Rachel Ben Avraham, Moshe Shorashim.

NIS 75 A.C.S. Yarrow, J'm. NIS 72 in loving memory of my father - Joen Schissel Hillel, Ramat Hasharon.

NIS 60 in loving memory of Milton Goldstein - Ethel Schin, Kiryat Ono. NIS 54 in loving memory of Amold Levy - Larry Levy, Efrat.

NIS 50 Muriel Harris, Kiryat Ono. In honor of my grandchildren, Lina and Avishai - Aliza Sender, Rishon LeZion. Carol Chasid, J'm. In memory of our dear husband and father, Haim - Genia, Mickey and Danny Gutman, Haifa. In memory of my uncle Al, z"l - Alon, J'm.

NIS 40 in memory of my aunt, Bertha R. Levin - Charles Rosenzweig, J'm. NIS 36 Harvey and Phyllis Narrol, Beersheba. David Lerner, J'm.

\$1,000 in memory of Marie and Simon Jaglom. Mr. and Mrs. Irving Schneider, New York, NY.

\$186 M.O.D.I.N., Denver, CO. \$136 The students of the JR & HS, New City Jewish Center, New York, NY. \$100 in memory of Gregory Howard Miller - Beverly Miller, San Diego, CA.

\$62 In memory of my wife, Hanne Ruth and brother, Morris Louis - Paul Ellenbogen.

\$50 in memory of our beloved brother Ali - Nezi and Helga Allweis, West Hartford, CT.

\$36 Morris and Sarah Geneslaw, Brooklyn, NY. In honor of our grandchildren, Holi, Jessica and Jeremy - Karen and Ken Klein, West Nyack, NY, and Netanya. In honor of the birth of Alexander Moses Calmas - Chestnut Hill, MA. Contributed by the grandchildren of Sylvia and Irving Heller, Bayville, NY.

\$35 Gimmel class of Temple Hillel Bnei Torah, Simon Fischer, Anna Harmon, Jeffrey Cohen, Kassa Belay, Danielle Chelnirsky, Zachary Ekin, Sara Schneidman, Janis and Benjamin Monat, W. Roxbury, MA.

\$25 M. Schmedt, Rochester, NY. Ala Carte Vender Services, Huntsville, AL.

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Having heard from their friends about the wonderful two-day tour to the Negev - FROM ABRAHAM TO BEN-GURION: DREAMS, VISIONS, REALITY - which took place a couple of weeks ago, many people have called the organisers, Shorashim and The Jerusalem Post Travel Club, for information.

Because it was such a great trip, and in order to satisfy the many readers who have heard about it, we are planning to repeat it in the early spring, before Pessah.

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הלל אהרן הלל

Rangers find some winning form

MIAMI (AP) — Mike Eastwood scored two goals — his first of the season — and Pat LaFontaine had another game-winner as the struggling New York Rangers beat the Florida Panthers 4-2 Wednesday night to win for only the second time in 13 games.

New York scored three goals in a 4:38 span in the third period to drop the Panthers' home record to 4-12-3. The Rangers, playing amid reports of a major shakeup, had a 1-7-4 record before Wednesday night — including a 4-3 loss to New Jersey on Tuesday night.

LaFontaine has 17 points (7 goals and 10 assists) in nine games against the Panthers and leads New York with 16 goals this season.

Islanders 4, Sabres 0
At Uniondale, New York, Tommy Salo stopped 28 shots as the New York Islanders beat the Buffalo Sabres to extend their unbeaten streak to three.

Robert Reichel had two goals and an assist for the Islanders, while Kenny Jonsson and Zigmund Palffy each had a goal and assist in the rough game, marked by 114 penalty minutes.

Lightning 2, Bruins 0
At Tampa, Florida, Corey Schwab made 31 saves for Tampa Bay's first

shutout this season as the Lightning beat the Boston Bruins.

Vladimir Vukobratovic's first-period goal and Dino Ciccarelli's late empty-netter helped Tampa Bay extend its home unbeaten streak to six games.

Red Wings 2, Avalanche 2
In Denver, Peter Forsberg scored with 2:15 left in regulation as the Colorado Avalanche and Detroit Red Wings skated to a tie.

Forsberg tied the game when he tipped in a backhander by Claude Lemieux, who had a goal and an assist for Colorado.

Canucks 5, Coyotes 1
In Phoenix, Pavel Bure had a goal and two assists as the Vancouver Canucks beat Phoenix to extend the Coyotes' winless streak to eight games.

Thrasher Linden, Gino Odjick, Dana Muzzey and Jyrki Lumme also scored for the Canucks, who won for the second time in their last eight games.

Blackhawks 0, Oilers 0
In Edmonton, Alberta, goaltenders Curtis Joseph and Jeff Hackett dueled for 65 minutes as the Edmonton Oilers and Chicago Blackhawks played to a tie.

Joseph made 28 saves to earn his third shutout of the season for the Oilers. Hackett, playing in overtime for the second consecutive night,

made 30 stops for his second shutout for the Blackhawks, both on the road.

Maple Leafs 6, Mighty Ducks 2
In Anaheim, California, Mats Sundin put the game out of reach with a pair of third-period goals 20 seconds apart and Darryl Hendrickson also scored twice as the Toronto Maple Leafs beat the Anaheim Mighty Ducks.

Rookie Mike Johnson, finally starting to generate some offense on the road, assisted on go-ahead goals by Hendrickson and Igor Korolev. Mathieu Schneider added an unassisted goal to help the league's second-weakest offensive team end a three-game road slump.

St. Louis 0, Blues 0
In St. Louis, the Blues' goaltender, Brian Boucher, made 28 saves to keep the Blues' winless streak at home to four games.

First Period — Tampa Bay, Mike Eastwood 2 (1:10, 1:15).
Second Period — New York, Pat LaFontaine 1 (2:15).
Third Period — New York, Pat LaFontaine 1 (4:38).
Shots on goal — Tampa Bay 30, Florida 19.
Penalty minutes — Tampa Bay 14, Florida 10.

Goalie — Tampa Bay, Corey Schwab 31 saves; Florida, Mike Smith 28 saves.

Whitney 10 (Goals: Gagne, 17:22; Lyle, 17:22).
First Period — Florida, Whitney 3 (1:10, 1:15, 1:15).
Second Period — New York, Whitney 3 (2:15, 2:15, 2:15).
Third Period — New York, Whitney 4 (4:38, 4:38, 4:38, 4:38).
Shots on goal — New York 12, Florida 9-11-2.

Power-play Opportunities — New York 0 of 3; Florida 1 of 2.
Goalie — New York, Richter 10-12-8 (28 shots-27 saves); Florida, Smith 10-12-8 (28 shots-27 saves).

First Period — New York, Richter 10-12-8 (28 shots-27 saves).
Second Period — New York, Richter 10-12-8 (28 shots-27 saves).
Third Period — New York, Richter 10-12-8 (28 shots-27 saves).

Goalie — New York, Richter 10-12-8 (28 shots-27 saves); Florida, Smith 10-12-8 (28 shots-27 saves).

Power-play Opportunities — New York 0 of 3; Florida 1 of 2.
Goalie — New York, Richter 10-12-8 (28 shots-27 saves); Florida, Smith 10-12-8 (28 shots-27 saves).

First Period — New York, Richter 10-12-8 (28 shots-27 saves).
Second Period — New York, Richter 10-12-8 (28 shots-27 saves).
Third Period — New York, Richter 10-12-8 (28 shots-27 saves).

Goalie — New York, Richter 10-12-8 (28 shots-27 saves); Florida, Smith 10-12-8 (28 shots-27 saves).

Goalie — New York, Richter 10-12-8 (28 shots-27 saves); Florida, Smith 10-12-8 (28 shots-27 saves).

First Period — Anaheim, Sundin 2 (1:10, 1:15).
Second Period — Anaheim, Sundin 2 (2:15, 2:15).
Third Period — Anaheim, Sundin 2 (4:38, 4:38).
Shots on goal — Anaheim 12, Toronto 9-11-2.

Power-play Opportunities — Anaheim 0 of 3; Toronto 1 of 2.
Goalie — Anaheim, Sundin 10-12-8 (28 shots-27 saves); Toronto, Richter 10-12-8 (28 shots-27 saves).

First Period — Anaheim, Sundin 10-12-8 (28 shots-27 saves).
Second Period — Anaheim, Sundin 10-12-8 (28 shots-27 saves).
Third Period — Anaheim, Sundin 10-12-8 (28 shots-27 saves).

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SPORTS

in brief

Nigeria appoint Milutinovic as new coach

LAGOS (Reuters) — Yugoslav Bora Milutinovic has been appointed coach of the Nigerian national team, a spokesman for the Nigeria Football Association (NFA) said yesterday.

An NFA spokesman said Milutinovic would prepare the Nigerians for next year's World Cup finals in France, where they are drawn in Group D with Spain, Bulgaria and Paraguay.

Milutinovic, 53, replaces Frenchman Philippe Troussier who was sacked by the NFA in September after guiding them to the World Cup finals. The Yugoslav was sacked last month by Mexico despite coaching them to France '98.

Kipketer tops Reuters poll

LONDON (Reuters) — Wilson Kipketer, who equalled and then twice smashed the long-standing 800 meters world record this year, is the winner of the Reuters 1997 Sports Personality poll.

The Kenyan-born Dane, who broke Seb Coe's 16-year-old record, knocked US golfer Tiger Woods and Swiss tennis player Martina Hingis into second and third positions in the poll of sports journalists.

Kipketer scored 220 points from a maximum 505 after a third of voters plumped for him as their top personality or runner-up. More than 100 sports journalists from 43 countries ranked their leading five sportsmen and women from a 30-strong list compiled by Reuters sports correspondents.

Woods was the first of four Americans to claim berths in the top six in the poll, ahead of tennis world No. 1 Pete Sampras, basketball's Michael Jordan and boxer Evander Holyfield.

Denmark join Dutch in NatWest Trophy

LONDON (Reuters) — Denmark will join the Netherlands in the 1999 NatWest Trophy, the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) said yesterday.

The 1999 competition will be contested by 60 teams — the 18 first class counties, Scotland, Ireland, Denmark, the Netherlands and 38 amateur teams representing English county boards.

The Danes will play away from home but the situation will be reviewed for 2000 pending the quality of a new grass square currently being laid in Brodby.

Stewart unveils non-tobacco sponsors

LONDON (Reuters) — Jackie Stewart yesterday unveiled two new, non-tobacco sponsors for his Formula One team weeks after motor racing's ruling body questioned its financial viability for the 1998 season.

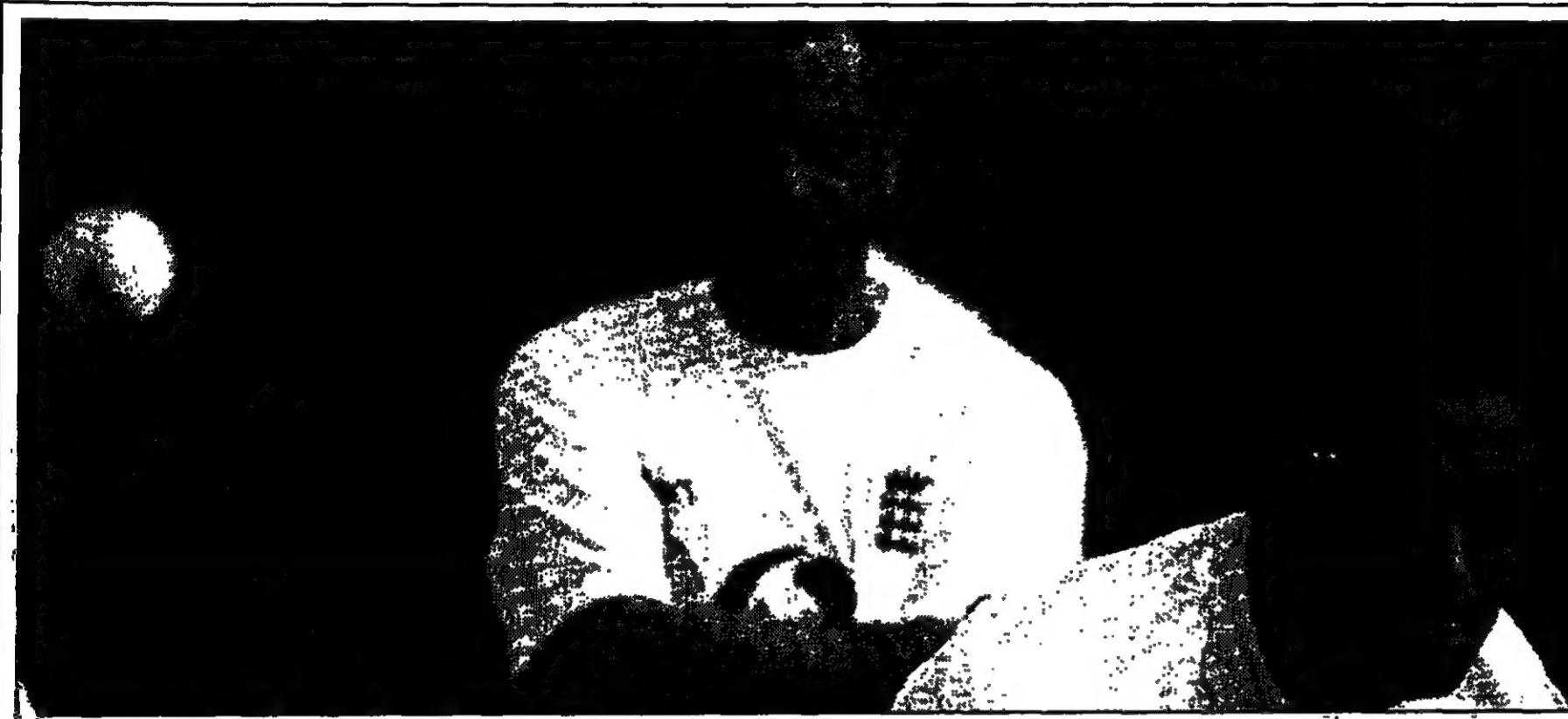
The former world champion, whose team entered the sport last season, announced deals with the Lear Corporation and MCI which are expected to bring in five million pounds a year.

Lear's deal is particularly important because it will see the automotive suppliers develop a state-of-the-art cockpit that will set new standards of safety in the sport. MCI are involved in communications services. Stewart remains the only team not to receive money from tobacco sponsorship.

Nagano to ban spectators' cellphones

TOKYO (AP) — Portable phones appear almost everywhere in Japan these days, but their use won't be allowed by spectators at the Winter Olympics in Nagano, the organizers yesterday.

Portable phones and pagers are on a list of 19 items banned from spectator seats at the games starting Feb. 7. Among other banned items at the games are weapons, dangerous objects and pets.



WATCHFUL EYE — England manager David Lloyd keeps tabs on his captain, Adam Hoolioake, during practise for today's Champions' Trophy final in Sarjeh. England play West Indies in a day-night match which can be seen locally on Star Sports.

SCOREBOARD

ENGLISH SOCCER — Premier League result on Wednesday: Newcastle United 0, Derby 0.

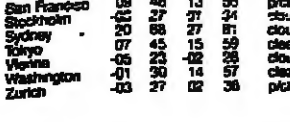
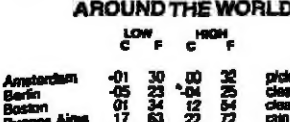
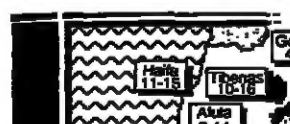
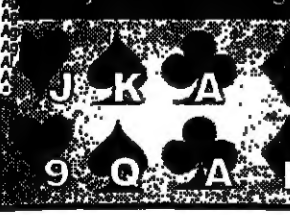
FA Challenge Cup second round replays on Wednesday: Exeter 3, Lincoln City 3 (After extra time). Score at 90 minutes: 2-2. Exeter won 4-3 on penalties and away to West Ham United in third round. Brighton 1, Scunthorpe 2 (Scunthorpe away to Crystal Palace).

Football League Cup (after extra time): Southampton 0, Northampton 0 (after extra time). Northampton away to Leicester in third round. Burnham Wood 0, Chesham 2 (Chesham at home to Reading). Chesterfield 0, Grimsby 2 (Grimsby at home to Norwich). Hereford 1, Colchester 1 (After extra time, score at 90 minutes: 1-1. Hereford won 5-4 on penalties. Hereford at home to Tranmere). Notts County 1, Preston 2 (After extra time, score at 90 minutes: 1-1. Preston at home to Stockport). Walsford 2, Torquay 1 (After extra time, score at 90 minutes: 0-0. Walsford at home to Sheffield Wednesday).

Taked round to be played on weekend of January 2.

WINNING CARDS

in yesterday's Mifal Hapayis daily chance drawing



Barry Sanders's 100-yard habit confronts Jets

NEW YORK — They say Detroit no longer churns out fuel-efficient engines, although anyone who has witnessed the little V-8 in Pontiac may disagree. The motor in Barry Sanders hasn't choked, wheezed or blown a gasket in more than three months.

Sanders is on a kind of 100-yard binge the NFL has never seen. Not only is his streak of 13 consecutive games with 100 rushing yards or more longer than any player has ever managed, it's more than some teams have gained. During this past weekend, Sanders alone outrushed 18 teams, including the Jets, Buccaneers, Jaguars, Dolphins, Seahawks, Raiders, Ravens, Patriots and Chiefs.

And his 138 yards against the Minnesota Vikings can be considered a mild afterthought.

You stop him the way you stop Michael Jordan. You prepare for Sanders by hoping he doesn't embarrass you too badly. As a defender, your place as a bit player in the Sanders highlight reel is almost assured every Sunday.

If there's any consolation for the unlucky team facing Sanders, it's this: The Lions often lose despite Sanders' efforts. They have been a study in stunning mediocrity throughout Sanders' brilliant career. Basically, the Lions have given Sanders the kind of slim support Walter Payton had in Chicago, pre-Fridge and pre-punky QB.

But this Sunday presents Sanders and the Lions with a pair of delicious challenges. Sanders needs 131 yards to reach 2,000 for the season. The Lions need a win to reach the playoffs. This double-barreled dose of home-team motivation is what awaits the Jets at the Silverdome.

"The main focus is beating a very competitive Jets team," Sanders said. "If we just keep focusing on winning the game, the playoffs and everything else will take care of itself. I think if we play well, we can easily get the 131 yards." In this instance, the odds are that a good day for Sanders will mean a good one for the Lions.

Those who believe the Jets are playoff-bound after their improbable weekend should think twice. There are no guarantees for the Jets this Sunday, particularly when Sanders has the ball and a few good excuses to keep running.

"You just have to understand," Jet Coach Bill Parcells said.

"He's a game-breaking-type player. If you give him room, he's going to hurt you."

The Jets may be in for a long afternoon, for this very reason: Parcells, defensive coordinator Bill Belichick and the Jets haven't seen a runner anywhere near the caliber of Sanders this year.

"He's awesome," said Jet cornerback Otis Smith, still soaking up his 15 minutes after returning two interceptions for touchdowns against Tampa Bay. "A majority of stuff he does, he doesn't even know he's going to do it until it happens. They say he's gotten slower, but this year he's gotten faster."

Sanders has conquered the decline that goes with longevity and in his ninth and

likely best season, he's still the premier back in football. The life span of a runner rarely extends this long, and even great ones eventually tire from the wear and tear. Emmitt Smith and Thurman Thomas should know. Just a few years ago, they were being compared to Sanders. Now he has left them and everyone else breathing his fumes. He has 1,869 yards, with a heaping six-yards-per-carry average, and still counting.

"Every time the ball is snapped, I expect to make something happen and make a big play," Sanders said. "I feel like each time I get stopped that I'm one play closer to breaking one."

A shifty 5-foot-9 runner who bursts through holes, maintains his balance and makes people miss may give the Jets' defense fits. This unit is spotty at best and doesn't have nose tackle Ernie Logan, done for the year with a broken leg. It doesn't receive the maximum from its premier players every Sunday. Some days Hugh

Douglas is there, some days he isn't. One day Mo Lewis is applying pressure, another day he's seldom seen. And has anyone heard from Marvin Jones?

Everyone must report for duty this weekend. The offense, with its patchwork line and shaky quarterback, is too unstable to expect more than two touchdowns to come from it. The margin for error, then, is slim for the Jets' defense. Smith will be matched against Herman Moore, the tall and speedy Lions receiver who beat the Vikings with big-time catches. Lions quarterback Scott Mitchell can be rattled and is prone to self-destructing, but he can also make the big plays.

The big concern, of course, is neither. The big concern is Sanders and his thirst for immortality.

Besides the 131 he needs for 2,000, Sanders has a chance at Eric Dickerson's single-season rushing record of 2,105 yards. He'll need 237. That's a reach for anybody but Barry. (Newsday)

AMERICAN CONFERENCE

Team	W	L	T	Pct.	PF	PA
New England	9	6	0	.600	327	277
Miami	9	6	0	.600	327	313
N.Y. Jets	9	6	0	.600	338	274
Buffalo	6	9	0	.400	234	316
Indianapolis	3	12	0	.200	285	362

Team	W	L	T	Pct.	PF	PA
Y-Fletcher	11	4	0	.733	366	291
Jacksonville	10	5	0	.667	374	309
Atlanta	7	8	0	.467	317	304
Baltimore	6	8	1	.433	312	329
Cincinnati	6	9	0	.400	339	391

Team	W	L	T	Pct.	PF	PA
Kansas City	12	3	0	.800	330	219
Denver	11	4	0	.733	434	219
Seattle	7	8	0	.467	327	353
Oakland	4	11	0	.267	315	399
San Diego	4	11	0	.267	263	387

Team	W	L	T	Pct.	PF	PA
N.Y. Giants	9	5	1	.633	287	258
Washington	7	7	1	.500	297	257
Philadelphia	6	8	1	.433	285	327
Dallas	6	9	0	.400	297	324
Arizona	3	12	0	.200	254	353

Team	W	L	T	Pct.	PF	PA
Green Bay	12	3	0	.800	391	261
Tampa Bay	9	6	0	.600	288	248
Detroit	8	7	0	.533	366	296
Minnesota	8	7	0	.533	315	311
Chicago	4	11	0	.267	248	390

Team	W	L	T	Pct.	PF	PA
San Francisco	13	2	0	.867	366	227
Carolina	7	8	0	.467	287	284
Atlanta	7	8	0	.467	284	331
New Orleans	6	9	0	.400	224	302
St. Louis	4	11	0	.267	269	341

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Playoff possibilities

Inside

Rangers
notch rare
victory

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Sports Editors
Joe Hoffman & Ori LewisToto
mania
overtakes
interest in
league

By ORI LEWIS

Any fears which Toto punters might have had about this week's soccer program being canceled were allayed yesterday when the Finance Ministry agreed to transfer the NIS 20 million (minimum) jackpot on offer this week.

The Toto hopeful will snuggle up at home and listen to the radio, or else they will brave the wintry weather in the hope that they might be the lucky ones to share in the NIS 20 million (minimum) jackpot on offer this week.

On the face of it, this weekend's National League fixtures do not appear to pose a daunting prospect for prediction, with perhaps only one or two matches looking as if the matchups are close.

But that is only half the story. Apart from the odd upset which the National League might produce, the Second Division will certainly be a tougher prospect for the punters.

Maccabi Petah Tikva's home match with leaders Beitar Jerusalem is the weekend's featured match. Beitar have not lost yet this season in the league, but despite their 5-2 win over Hapoel Beit She'an last week, they were far from impressive. A club like Maccabi Petah Tikva might just be the ones who will even up the Jerusalemites' record just a little.

Maccabi's journeymen are fit for the most part, while Beitar are missing many of their key players through injury or suspension. But while this might affect other teams, Beitar appear to have a bevy of star reserves who appear able to keep the momentum. One wonder for just how much longer, however.

In other matches, second-placed Hapoel Tel Aviv host Hapoel Ashdod, while the two Haifa sides appear to have fairly easy fixtures: Hapoel are away to Hapoel Beit She'an and Maccabi host Hapoel Beersheba at Kiryat Eliezer.

This weekend's National League fixtures (all matches tomorrow)

Maccabi Herzliya v. Hapoel Kfar Sava, Herzliya 16:30; Hapoel Tel Aviv v. Hapoel Ashdod, Bloomfield 15:00; Hapoel Jerusalem v. Hapoel Petah Tikva, Teddy Stadium 14:30; Maccabi Haifa v. Hapoel Beersheba, Kiryat Eliezer 15:00; Bnei Yehuda v. Ironi Rishon, Hatikva Quarter 14:30; Maccabi Petah Tikva v. Beitar Jerusalem, Petah Tikva 17:15; Ironi Ashdod v. Maccabi Tel Aviv, Ashdod 15:30.

Maccabi upsets Olympiakos 76-71

End Group A in top three thanks to Pilsen's win over CSKA Moscow

By BRIAN FREEMAN

The Maccabees ain't got nothing on Maccabi Tel Aviv. Maccabi Tel Aviv did their namesakes proud last night, giving Olympiakos a Hanukka lesson about the power of the underdog to emerge victorious over powerful Greek adversaries with a 76-71 win in Athens.

The victory over the defending European champions, combined with CSKA Moscow's 71-63 loss to Efes Pilsen in Istanbul, means that Maccabi ends the EuroLeague's first round in third place with a 5-5 record, earning it the right to play the three bottom clubs in Group B when the EuroLeague resumes on January 8.

Maccabi — along with Olympiakos and Efes Pilsen — are now placed in a group with Split, Ankara and Porto, which have a combined 9-21 record. A Maccabi loss would have put it in a group whose three new teams have a 21-9 combined mark and made it a much more difficult road to the Final Four.

Maccabi earned only its second win in nine tries this decade in Greece during the championships with perhaps its best defensive performance of the season.

In Olympiakos's 87-73 rout of Maccabi at Yad Elihu earlier in the season, Arturas Karnisovas and Steve Hawkins scored a combined 59 points (with Dragan Tarlach, who did not play last night, adding 13 more), but last night Nadav Henefeld and Doron Sheffer led the team's defensive effort in limiting them to a combined 19 points.

The loss was Olympiakos's first at home this season and only its third in the past 25 European home games.

Earlier in the evening, it appeared as if the Greeks were on their way to another victory before their fans.

Olympiakos batted from behind for much of the first half to tie the game at 33-33 going into the locker room.

A few seconds into the second period, Rashard Griffith committed his fourth foul on a drive to the basket.

Considering the fact that both his backup Constantin Popa and top defensive player Henefeld had three fouls, it was not too difficult to imagine the Greek big men exploiting the situation to totally dominate the inside.

But instead of folding up and quitting, or allowing itself to be



HELPING MACCABI — Efes Pilsen's forward Mirsad Turkcan (left) fights for the ball with Valeri Daineko of CSKA Moscow during their Group A game in Istanbul on yesterday. Efes Pilsen won 71-63, which meant that Maccabi's win over Olympiakos put the Israelis in third place in the group.

overmatched, Maccabi took the lead on the next shot and never let it go.

Maccabi's big men more than

held their own, out-rebounding Olympiakos 42-31, a key factor to controlling the tempo of the game.

The key point in the contest came with 14 minutes remaining in the game and Maccabi holding on to a slim 43-40 advantage.

A foul was called on Alexios Amanaidis and in the ensuing argument from the Olympiakos bench the referee also gave the

team a technical.

Maccabi made all four free-throw attempts to boost the margin to 47-40, a cushion which was much needed later as Olympiakos closed the game to as close as 71-69 with a minute left.

Randy White led Maccabi with 18 points, while Oded Katash had 17 (only 5 in the second half), Doron Sheffer 14, Rashard Griffith 12 (10 of them after he had committed his fourth foul), Nadav Henefeld and Constantin Popa 6 and Borko Radovic 3.

For Olympiakos, which finished the group in first place despite the loss, Milan Tomic led the way with 16 points, John Rogers had 14, Dusan Vukotic 14, Steve Hawkins 12 (all in the last five minutes of the game), Arturas Karnisovas 7 (only one in the second half), Panagiotis Fassoulas, in his first European game back from injury, 5, and Alexios Amanaidis 4.

In Barcelona, Hapoel Jerusalem lost to Barcelona 69-65 to finish bottom of group C. Jerusalem now play AEK Athens, Team System Bologna and Cibona Zagreb, the top three finishers in Group D.

Group A	W	L	Pts
Olympiakos	7	3	17
Efes Pilsen	6	4	16
CSKA Moscow	5	5	15
Maccabi Tel Aviv	5	5	15
Real Madrid	4	6	14
Limoges	3	7	13

Group B	W	L	Pts
Benetton Treviso	9	1	19
Estudiantes	6	4	16
FCBK Salomka	6	4	16
Telecom Ankara	5	5	15
Split	4	6	14
Porto	0	10	10

Group C	W	L	Pts
Vander Bologna	9	1	19
Barcelona	7	3	17
Pau Orthez	5	5	15
Partizan Belgrade	4	6	14
Ulfar	3	7	13
Hapoel Jerusalem	2	8	12

Group D	W	L	Pts
AEK Athens	6	4	16
TS Bologna	6	4	16
Cibona	5	5	15
Alba Berlin	5	5	15
Ljubljana	4	6	14
Racing Paris	4	6	14

The top three clubs in Group A are placed in a new group with the bottom three teams in Group B (and vice versa) while the top three clubs in Group B are placed in a new group with the bottom three teams in Group C (and vice versa). Maccabi advances ahead of CSKA Moscow because they outscored the Russians in the two games played against them. Every team brings its record along with it to the new group and plays the three new teams twice. After these six games, the top four in each group advance to the Final 16 best-of-three series, with the top two in each group holding the home-court advantage.

Bulls old-timers still good enough against young Lakers

CHICAGO (AP) — Michael Jordan, Dennis Rodman and the rest of the Chicago Bulls' old-timers did just about everything better than the kids from Los Angeles, defeating the Lakers 104-83 Wednesday night.

The 34-year-old Jordan, often matched against teen-ager Kobe Bryant, scored 36 points. And Rodman, 36, with a new hair dye-job featuring a smiley face on the back of his head, grabbed 14 rebounds as the Bulls improved to 11-1 at home.

Luc Longley, who missed the previous game with a sprained ankle, added a career-high 23 points for the two-time defending NBA champions, who shot 50 percent and out-

busted the league's supposed team of tomorrow.

Bryant scored a career-high 33 points — 16 in the garbage-time fourth quarter — for Los Angeles, which is 7-5 since its franchise-record 11-0 start.

Wizards 88, Heat 74

In Washington, the Wizards raced to a 32-12 lead after one quarter and Rod Strickland scored 21 points as Washington improved its record at the MCI Center to 6-0.

Alonzo Mourning, who under-

went surgery in September for a torn knee tendon, was activated from the injured list earlier in the day. He came off the bench and had 24 points on 9-for-16 shooting with nine rebounds, four blocks, a flagrant foul and a technical.

Pacers 87, Knicks 80

In Indianapolis, Rik Smits scored 18 points and Indiana handed New York its sixth straight road loss.

It was the sixth consecutive home victory for the Pacers. New York, meanwhile, is the midst of its longest road losing streak since it set a franchise record of 18 straight defeats from Dec. 3, 1987 to Feb. 22, 1988.

Patrick Ewing led the Knicks with 23 points and 12 rebounds, but he missed two shots from in close with New York challenging late in the game.

Reggie Miller scored 14 points and Mark Jackson, Dale Davis and Chris Mullin had 10 apiece as all five Indiana starters reached double figures.

Timberwolves 94, 76ers 90

In Philadelphia, Tom Gugliotta scored a season-high 30 points,

including eight in a late run as Minnesota came back from a 10-point deficit.

Stephen Marbury, who made two clutching free throws with 12 seconds left, chipped in 14 points and 14 assists, and Stanley Roberts had 10 rebounds as the Timberwolves won for just the second time in their last six games.

Celtics 88, Raptors 83

In Toronto, Walter McCarty hit a key 3-point shot with 59 seconds left and Chauncey Billups scored nine points over the final 4:16 to lead Boston over Toronto.

The win was the Celtics' third in their last four games and gave them a three-game series sweep over the Raptors, who extended their home losing streak to 11 games as their NBA-worst record dropped to 2-23.

Antoine Walker had 18 points and nine rebounds. McCarty and Ron Mercer each scored 12 points.

Hawks 94, Cavaliers 83

In Atlanta, Steve Smith scored 23 points and Atlanta extended its winning streak to four games, pulling

away in the fourth quarter to beat Cleveland.

The Cavaliers lost for the second time in three games after a 10-game winning streak.

The Hawks, coming off a four-game West Coast trip in which they won the final three, sealed the victory with a 15-5 run in the fourth period. Christian Laettner scored 18 points and Blaylock had 16 to go along with seven assists.

Nets 105, Pistons 101

In East Rutherford, New Jersey, rookie Keith Van Horn snatched a tie with a three-point play with 1:12 to play and New Jersey broke its 11-game losing streak against Detroit.

Kendall Gill added a clutch 3-pointer after Van Horn's basket as the Nets, who squandered a 15-point fourth quarter lead before coming

back, beat the Pistons for the first time since Feb. 6, 1995.

Van Horn, who the Pistons claimed was getting preferential treatment from the officials, and Gill each had 22 points.

Jayson Williams added 13 points and 22 rebounds, Kerry Kinles had 20 points and Sam Cassell had 19 points and 11 assists.

Hornets 99, Bucks 90

In Charlotte, North Carolina, the Hornets shot 81 percent in the second quarter and, led by Vlade Divac's 21 points and 12 rebounds, beat Milwaukee for their fifth straight win.

Spurs 98, Grizzlies 87

In San Antonio, David Robinson scored 33 points and Avery Johnson had another 20-assist game as San Antonio survived a mid-game lull and defeated Vancouver.

EASTERN CONFERENCE			
Atlantic Division			
Team	W	L	Pct GB
Orlando	16	8	.667 -
Miami	15	9	.625 1
New York	14	10	.583 2
New Jersey	13	10	.565 2 1/2
Boston	11	12	.478 4 1/2
Washington	11	14	.440 5 1/2
Philadelphia	6	18	.273 9
Central Division			
Atlanta	19	5	.792 -
Charlotte	15	7	.682 3
Cleveland	15	8	.652 3 1/2
Indiana	15	8	.652 3 1/2
Chicago	15	8	.625 4
Milwaukee	11	12	.478 7 1/2
Detroit	11	14	.440 8 1/2
Toronto	2	22	.083 17

WESTERN CONFERENCE			
Midwest Division			
Team	W	L	Pct GB
Houston	13	7	.650 -
Utah	14	9	.609 1/2
San Antonio	14	10	.583 1
Minnesota	10	13	.435 4 1/2
Vancouver	9	16	.360 6 1/2
Dallas	5	18	.217 9 1/2
Denver	2	20	.091 12
Pacific Division			
Seattle	19	5	.792 -
LA Lakers	18	6	.750 1/2
Phoenix	13	8	.619 4 1/2
Portland	13	9	.591 5
Sacramento	8	18	.333 11
Golden State	6	16	.268 12 1/2
LA Clippers	4	20	.167 15

Wednesday's games: Washington 88, Miami 74; Boston 88, Toronto 83; Indiana 87, New York 80; New Jersey 105, Detroit 101; Minnesota 94, Philadelphia 80; Charlotte 98, Milwaukee 80; Atlanta 94, Cleveland 83; Chicago 104, LA Lakers 83; San Antonio 98, Vancouver 87.

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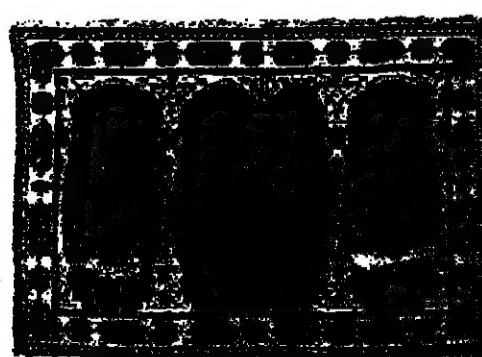
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